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cover disks instructions



Cover disk 150 Design Works

Before you go any further, write protect your disk. Boot from your hard drive or Workbench disk as normal and insert the Design Works cover disk. Installation of Design Works is very straightforward. Click on the install icon and follow the on-screen instructions and you can't go far wrong. If you want to install it to a floppy you'll have to have one formatted

previously. The first screen gives you the option to select your level of expertise, which allows you to have some control of the installation process. Unless you have any good reason to do otherwise, select an easy option as this will save you effort. Click proceed and you are then asked where you want the Design Works directory installed. If you want to install to floppy, insert the formatted disk and click on 'Store Drives'. Now select the destination from the list of drives. Make sure you don't select a disk with a space in its name as this may confuse the software! The installer will chug away for a few moments and then inform you that Design Works is ready to use. Single drive users will have a few disk swaps to endure.

You'll also find directories on the disk containing support files for the Imagine and WoodWorld tutorials.

IF YOUR DISK/CD WON'T LOAD

Be sure to read the instructions on this and previous pages carefully. If you have any problems, please contact the publisher for more information.

1. Check the instructions on this and previous pages carefully.
2. Check the instructions on this and previous pages carefully.

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Cover disk 151 Minskies Furballs



CJ Amiga Magazine are delighted to announce that we have the exclusive demo of this great Atari clone for you to try out. Minskies Furballs from Binary Evolutions is one addictive game, once you've tried it it just won't be able to stop. Minskies works on all Amigas with 1Mhz and getting the cover disk to run couldn't be simpler. All you have to do is put cover disk 151 into your Amiga, turn it on. Voilà: you've got two levels of Minskies to play around with.

The control is simple to get the hang of. Using either a joystick or the keyboard, the aim of the game is to get as many of the little coloured cats in groups of four or more. To move the blocks around use the cursor keys or right or left on your joystick. And to spend your fur a little and make things a bit trickier, your opponent will lob a few fish and grey blocks at you just to make things difficult. You've also got some weapons and protection devices at your disposal. To access a weapon just press fire, up, A1 and Amiga.

We got the exclusive review of Minskies Furballs on page 38 of this issue of CJ Amiga Magazine so turn there straight away if you want to find out more about this great game.



DISK 150

Design Works

Those directories in full



What is Design Works?

Design Works is what is known as a structured drawing package. It differs from standard paint packages such as Personal Paint and DPaint in that instead of producing the image pixel by pixel, it produces it mathematically. What this means is that you can display or print it at any size or resolution without it losing detail and sharpness. It is ideal for making maps and diagrams, which if you've ever tried making one on a standard paint program you will know can look aghast when printed, however good they looked on the screen. It's also well suited to producing signs, symbols, banners, technical drawings and designs up to 500 inches square. It can use standard bitmapped graphics too, allowing shapes and text to be overlaid on them. Posters, invitations, presentations, tape cassette covers - the list of uses is endless.

If you experimented with X-CAD 2000 which we gave away with our November 1994 issue, you will notice that Design Works has certain similarities. Both work with objects made up of lines. The difference is that while X-CAD 2000 specializes in precision and accuracy of scale, Design Works is all about presentation and ease of use. You wouldn't want to design a house with Design Works, and X-CAD is not the best program for producing giant birthday cards.

Design Works' real strength is in its user-friendliness. Almost every feature is available at a couple of mouse clicks, and none are difficult to use. If you are familiar with similar design software, or DTP software, or even if you've used our newer mounted disk or CD of Woodworth, you are half way there. The basic idea is simple: you are presented with a page on which you can draw, write, paste images to. You can then print it out on your own printer or output the page to disk as an image for a repro house to print out for you on a superior type of printer. This tutorial will introduce many of the basic features of the software. If you would a further tutorial or have any specific questions about Design Works, please write in and we'll do our best to answer queries through the pages of the magazine.

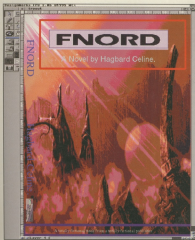
Design Works is easy to use but don't be fooled by the simple display into thinking that there aren't very many options. When you first load up Design Works, you will see a small toolbox menu and a blank page. Each of the eight menu icons in the toolbox brings up its own sub-menu when selected, so there are a lot more options than appears at first glance.

The task running along the top and left edges of the blank page are rulers - if you have

used any DTP packages or modern word processors, the concept should be familiar. If not, all you really need to know is that they show the exact dimensions of the printed page, and by watching the small red cursors on the two bars which track the mouse pointer, you can precisely edge your objects.

Getting started

The first thing to do is to jump right in and try it out. Select the Drawing toolbox icon, which looks like a small pencil, and you



► For the top picture (showing the Apple and Mac OS X icons) with dimensions open, the picture is by Braden and Frances.

will be presented with a submenu containing eight tools.

These tools are: Line, Rounded Line, Rectangle, Ellipse, Open Polygon, Closed Polygon, Freehand Shape, Closed Shape.

These are the basic tools from which everything you draw will

be made. Try each one and find out what they do (like figure 1). Some of the options will go on drawing lines. Double-click on the final point to exit draw mode.

OK, does that? Go to the first menu in the menu bar at the top of the screen and select the first option, **File**, which will bring up a nice new sheet for us to work on. Draw a rectangle in the middle of the screen and then click on the Selection icon in the toolbox, which looks like an arrow. This is the option which allows you to resize, move, or generally mutilate anything you have drawn. Click on your rectangle at any point along the line and you will see 12 red dots appear

around the rectangle. Look closely and you will see that the dots on the junctions of the lines are rounded and the dots on the rounded shapes are squares. These two different types of dot serve very different purposes.

Reshaping

Click on one of the round dots on the bottom of your rectangle, and hold the mouse button down. Now you can drag that dot, and the lines that go to it, anywhere you want. Drag it down a little way and then move it under the other round dot on the bottom line. When you release the mouse button, you will have a perfect right-angle triangle. Now grab one

of the square corner dots and try dragging that. These dots allow you to stretch the object in any direction, and if you move them far enough, you can make the object flip right over!

There is one more thing you can do with the selection pointer. Click on any part of the line and hold the button down. The outline will go red. If you move the mouse pointer around, you will



► The new style menu is pulled up from the palette menu. It allows you to choose the line width, stroke, and fill style.



► Here the line width and shape fill values are set, all you have to do is draw your shape and fill.



► Use it by magic, because that!



► Simply add the text, and the matter of words you're done; you can't necessarily read it.



► The best way to know what the drawing toolbar icons do is to try them out.

drag the entire shape with you and can reposition it where you like.

Colours

Next we are going to move into colour. Now that you have the hang of the basic functions, it's time to do a simple greeting. Close down any projects you no longer need and start up a new one. Select the layout left icon, the one which looks like a paint palette. Select the first icon in the sub-menu, which looks like a pencil, to set up the pen style requester (Figure 2).

Move the line width slider along until the number 4 appears by the side – this should be about the right line width. Close the requester in the normal way and click on the black colour square in the sub-menu to set the line colour to black.

Now click on the Fill Pattern toolbar icon (next to the Palette icon), and select the red square. From now until you change settings, shapes will be drawn in a black line with a width of four and will be filled in red.

Ready to start? Click Back to the drawing toolbar, select the closed polygon icon and start drawing a shape like in Figure 3. You don't have to get the lines to join up yourself, because after you double-click to stop drawing the shape, the last and first dots you draw will be joined.

As soon as you have finished drawing, it will automatically fill in the shape and thicken the line. You should end up with something very like Figure 4. If you are not totally happy with the way the shape has come out, remember

you can reshape it by dragging the dots about.

Adding text

Click on the Text toolbar icon (a big A) and you will see a fairly well-explanatory sub-menu. By clicking on the first icon you can load in a font. The other icons allow you to align the text and select text, underline or italic. Select a font – preferably a CGFont to avoid blackness – in a large size – 40 point would be about right. Click the mouse pointer inside your shape where you want the text to start and type in a short message. The text will not wrap, so when you get to the edge of the shape, press return to continue typing on the next line. You can highlight text and select the centre aligning tool as I did for the short or bottom line (Figure 5) to improve presentation.

Select your text as an object by clicking on it with the Selection arrow pointer. Now go to the Palette and click on a colour, and the text will change to that colour. If you select the Fill Pattern toolbar icon, it will change the background colour of your text, but in this case leave it as red.

Going further

There are of course a lot more options we haven't looked at. We haven't even touched on the Transform, Zoom and Macro tools, and there are all sorts of configuration and control options you can select from the menu bar if you want to dive in and try them, you should find them quite intuitive and easy to understand.

Importing images

There is one very important feature we haven't yet dealt with: the use of bitmap graphics. This greetings card project will illustrate the subject to you.

Figure 1

First set up the size of your project. Select the Projects/Page Setup option from the pull-down menu. Select a suitable paper size and type in the dimensions of the card you are going to print on. I have set up this page for standard 8 1/2 by 4 inch card, which makes pocket size greetings cards.

Now click on the white square at the top left of the page (not the screen!) where the text starts next. Drag it half way along the top ruler and release. The ruler is now centred on the middle of the

card where it will be typed. Draw a one point line down the centre.

Figure 2

Select the ProjectImport menu and choose a picture from the file requester. Pictures will tend to be too big when they load in, because Design/Works uses 72 dots per inch as default. Resolve by clicking on the Transform tool menu and then the scale button or by dragging the corner dots. Position the pictures, remembering that when the card is folded, the right half of the page will be the front. Pictures can be flipped horizontally or vertically.

Figure 3

Once the pictures are in place, it is time to apply the text. Select

Hints and tips

1. Hold down shift key when drawing a line to lock it to 90 or 45 degrees. Use the Settings/Gridsnap and Settings/Divides options from the menu for accurate alignment of objects.
2. To change screenmode, select the Settings menu. You'll find the sub option there. Don't panic when it seems to ignore you – you have to select Settings/Show Settings, then quit the program and restart before the screenmode changes.
3. The pen style requester allows you to choose how your lines start and end. Click on the end icon, change it to the arrowhead, and from now on any lines you draw will become arrows.
4. Select Project/Drawing Size from the pull-down menu and you can resize the drawing to make it fit on many pages by dragging the page shape which appears in the requester. Make it one page down and seven along. Select a very big font, and type a message across the page. Print it out for an instant banner.
5. Ensure your printer is properly set up with the Project/Page Setup menu. Design/Works uses the Preferences printer driver.
6. Select more than one object at a time by shift-clicking on them or by drawing a square around them with the Selection pointer (the arrow).
7. Multiple objects can be joined together by selecting the objects you want linked, and then clicking on the join icon, the fourth one down on the left of the Selection sub-menu. Joined objects are then treated as a single object and can all be moved, scaled or modified together.
8. Make shapes with no fill colour by selecting the null fill icon from the Fill Pattern menu – the G with a line through it. Alternatively, select a fill pattern and the null icon in the Palette menu for a filled shape with no coloured outline.
9. Change a colour in the Palette menu by double-clicking on it to bring up an edit colour requester. Change fill patterns by double clicking on the appropriate pattern icon. You can draw into the fill pattern with the currently selected palette colour to make your own fills.
10. Use the ProjectImport option to load in images in IFF, JPEG, PCX and other image formats. These can then be reshaped and dragged like other objects.
11. Have fun!



the Text tool item, click on the text icon and select a font. Use a simple, easy to read font for the most important text, as that way you get your message across without distracting from the picture. Reserve decorative fonts for specific effects.

Position the text cursor where you want the text and type. Don't worry if it doesn't look right, after you have finished you can drag the text about just like an object, and you can highlight all or part of

it to make it bold, underlined or italic, change the size or change the font. When it's all positioned to your satisfaction, print it out, fold it, and post it to a pal.

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What's on Super

You want a top quality Amiga CD packed full of the best software, and that's exactly what you get.

How to use CUCD7

As with prior Amiga CDs, CUCD7 can be loaded on 512K Amigas with CD32 emulation or simply a straight CD32. All other CD-equipped Amigas can use the CD after booting from Workbench. The CD will not boot under any Kickstart earlier than 3.0. If boot from Workbench or a hard drive, it's important to first click on the 'Test CD' icon. This sets up various settings and makes MUI 3.8 temporarily available if it is not already installed. Please note that running software directly from CD is a touch-and-go business. While we've gone to a lot of effort to make many programs run from the CD, others may have to be debugged to your hard drive either manually or by running an included installer. 'Test CD' also sets the New Icons patch so don't be surprised if the icons change.

A word on Demos and games

Demos and games are almost never coded in a so-called OS legal way. That means that while they may work for us, they might not work for you for several reasons. Either your hardware set-up is slightly different or some third party software running on your Amiga may upset the demo or confuse resources that the demogame requires. Please do not assume the CD is simply 'faulty' if any of this software refuses to run.

It simply isn't possible for us to ensure everything on the CD run on every possible hardware/software configuration. The majority of MUI will be fine on the majority of systems, but the further away your system is from the norm, the more things it is likely to fall over on. Do not be too surprised if you find some software doesn't work on your 512K Kickstart 1.3 Amig or your Power PC accelerated 486/05. The people who wrote the software probably didn't have a machine like yours to test it on.

There are things you can do to make the software more likely to run. Closing down any other software, screens and so on will free up resources. It might be better to run by the status and copy the demogame onto your hard drive and then boot with its startup sequence. This involves resetting and holding down both mouse buttons, then click on 'Test' with no startup sequence.

You'll then be placed into AmigaDOS so you'll need to know enough about that aspect of your Amiga to navigate to where the offending software is and run it. As a general rule, if the game or demo still doesn't work then it's incompatible with your machine. Some demos will only over work when run in this fashion. If you get a requester asking for a specific volume then the software needs 'dosgen' set up and so is fairly likely it has an installer that should have been run.

Finally, if you are having problems getting anything to run, please please make sure you have read all the documentation before you eat your CD in frustration!

Minskies Furballs

This month's cover game is the excellent 'bats inspired' Minskies Furballs from Binary Emotions. This addictive puzzle game demands pits you against the computer in a frenzy of fur-fighting, brain-bending action. Seeing coloured rats around as they fall on their face, don't worry into a surprisingly passive heap. Match up rows or columns of like coloured rats to lower your own heap and raise your opponent's!

Using CUCD7 on non-Amigas.

If you don't have a CD-ROM for your Amiga but have access to a CD-ROM on another computer, then it may still be possible for you to get a lot out of CUCD7. Files can be copied onto PC formatted 32K disks, then loaded into your Amiga using Crossdos, which came as standard with Workbench versions 2 and higher. If you don't know how to use Crossdos, you will find it fully explained in the Workbench manual. The programs on the CD will not run on PCs or Macs.

What's in your drawers

Readers who have used a CD Amiga CD-ROM before will find everything fairly familiar. CUCD7 is set up as a Workbench disk, and can be loaded from on an appropriate system. Clicking the 'Test CD' icon will set up your system to run from the CD properly. The first thing that you may notice as a result of clicking on this is that all the icons change - don't panic, this is the excellent NeXTstep system, not some obscure virus.

The Workbench 3.1 drawers such asPrefs, System, Utilities and Tools are in the root directory. If you haven't seen our last couple of CDs, then be warned there isn't a support drawer any more, and everything previously found in the drawer has been moved into Tools, System and Utilities, as appropriate. The Magazine drawer has also moved into the CUCD drawer.

In the root directory of CUCD7;

Design Works

This month's full application is Design Works, a highly intuitive and easy to use design package which will have you designing your own birthday cards, album covers, architectural blueprints and more in no time. This program won't suit brought from the CD - it needs to be installed, simply done by clicking on the install icon. You will find a short tutorial on Design Works on page 8.

Worms - The Directors Cut

Worms is the ultimate upgrade for owners of the utterly brilliant Worms - The Directors Cut. This directory is packed full of comedy armed action. A superior selection of custom levels exclusively for Worms - TDC, unique W - TDC soundtracks, and for the enjoyment of all evil sundry, multiple megatons of animated tortoise-like nonsense to tickle your funny bones. Please be warned - if you feel deeply for the



CD-ROM 7?



well-being of our self-champing brothers, their well state of this directory.

Utilities

MouseViz Clock and some tools for working with Newton images can be found here.

Tools

Contains the Workbench 3.1 tools drawer.

Prefs

The Workbench 3.1 preferences drawer and Newton prefs.

System

The 3.1 system drawer in addition to the Support drawer from CUOS4. The latest versions of MUI 3.8, PPPShare, Stage, Help, Power, Revtools, HappyDMK, GIMPlay, Hippocrypter, Play18, Setmoder and SuperView are all contained here to aid access to the rest of the CD.

WWW

This directory contains multiple megabytes of Internet WWW sites which be browsed directly off the CD without need of an Internet connection. Special CD Amiga versions of the premier web browsers, Mosaic and Browse, are provided to access the site where an improved main menu system is now included for easier navigation around this treasure trove of information and entertainment.

Inside the CUOS drawer;

Online

The online section this month kicks off with the latest version of AmiTOR Host-to-Hoster helps take away those football blues with Airc, Browse and Myager. Samba makes life a lot easier for those of you out there whose nightmares are filled with Amiga to PC networking and Amiga-Gopher is just the ticket for making your web site more animated.

Programming

Her hands will be delighted to find the ProAssi 486 G80x assembler in this month's programming section - if all those letters and numbers mean nothing to you, you probably won't like it anyway! Affex users are very well supported this month with the ProCDent command, Revolution and ZedFlow, an Amiga GUI front-end system.

Graphics

A real treasure trove the graphics lover on CyCOP with a large selection of anims in PIF and quicktime format, the latest GIF toolkit and CyberArt, a collection of 3D objects to keep those of you who got last month's imagined giveaway busy for weeks (months on a 68030), and a bunch of backgrounds and icons for smartening up your Workbench, including the latest 485 NewIcons and the full Uberbench collection. They will also find the aMPEG MPEG and QT quicktime animation players, with sample animations to try out.

Readers

Here's the section you probably I've been scanning through all your contributions through the month and there's some really good stuff to see and hear. There are masses of reads, plenty of pics, gaggles of games and utilities unbundled, including the funniest, scariest game style game I've ever seen and a superb collection of utilities which will make life a lot easier for users of Wordworth 3.4, as given away on our December 96 CD.

CD-ROM

Here you will find the most up-to-date version of the excellent AmiCOPS filing system for CD-ROMs and some useful information for CD32 owners which will help them connect their machines to an Amiga and plug in 42008 style keyboards.

Demos

As usual, we've included all the latest top "scene" demos. There's hours of demo viewing entertainment to be found here. Some of these require fairly powerful computers to run, so check any accompanying text files first.

Information

The latest version of the AmigaGuide to the Amiga's shared libraries. All these libraries that have been hanging around on your hard drive for years that even Molder and Scully couldn't explain are fully documented. Also the latest updates on Team Amiga.

Utilities

Power up your computer's foreign file format handling with the very latest AS detarpses for GIF, JPEG, PNG and SVG files. iFNMounter mounts virtual floppy disks on your hard drive, seamlessly sequesters AmigaGuide documents to allow you to opt to the choice. There is also a demo of PCX, the latest and possibly greatest graphics PC emulator, and the newest version of ClassAct.

Sound

All sorts for audio junkies this month, with a big collection of players and player utilities including D99Playmaster, a library based multi-format modplayer, Splayer, a GUI front end for Play18, TRGS real-time effects generator, Soundbox sampler converter and effects editor, MaPlay MP3G audio player, a demo of MEGICOMV and much much more.

Games

Entertainment central with a collection of PG and demo games. As always, we can't guarantee that they'll work on your particular Amiga so do read whatever documentation is provided, checking system requirements and so on. Lots of fun to be had here.

Driving CUOSs

Generally driving CUOSs is as simple as clicking on an icon of something you want to run, play, see etc. You should find it will automatically activate a player, viewer or run the program without further ado. Of course if you access CUOS from a directory utility then you can use your own choice of players, viewers etc. in the specific files.

We can't emphasize enough the importance of clicking on any readme or other documentation files inside each directory. There's simply too much material for us to detail here so you'll have to explore, read the documentation and see if each program or what ever is of use or interest to you.

So here for exploring CUOSIT and don't forget to send us any work of your own so we can include it on later CD's. Also feel free to write into the magazine and tell us what you'd like to see on future CDs or how you'd like to see them organised. Address all letters of this topic to CD Editor.

CU Amiga coverdisk special offer!



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News

Viscorp-Amiga Deal Off



Viscorp's contract to acquire the assets of Amiga Technologies has been cancelled.

Viscorp had been lined up to buy the technology and trademarks of Amiga Technologies, primarily for use in its iD selling box project, designed to combine Internet access with home TV viewing. The contract was cancelled as Viscorp failed to pay the agreed US\$20 million within the stipulated time scale, reduced from an

original \$40 million price from initial negotiations. This means the Amiga name and its technology is now open to new bidders.

However, Viscorp are by no means out of the picture. They have stated that they will continue to work towards the purchase of the Amiga technology.

Viscorp say that they no longer believe the assets are worth the agreed price. They say a major factor was the loss of income as a guaranteed distributor for

Viscorp's set-up and Amiga products since Escom filed for bankruptcy in July. Further, Viscorp claims that a large and valuable inventory has not been secured by Escom's trustees.

Finally, Viscorp referred to unnamed parties of the Amiga technology by 'small and large companies' also reducing the value of the ownership of the technology.

Viscorp reaffirmed that they would continue to work towards the purchase of the Amiga

technology. Until October 31, Viscorp directly funded the operation of Amiga Technologies from company resources.

It has been suggested that QuikPak are a favourite to acquire the Amiga rights. QuikPak are a Canadian company currently producing AM800T motherboards and selling complete AM800T systems. At the time of going to press the situation has not been resolved, as the state of limbo continues. CU will keep you updated.



New Sound Cards Imminent

Two new 16-bit sound cards are soon to be released as finally the choice of 16-bit audio upgrades starts to pan out from the limited selection that's been on offer until now. ACT in Germany are currently putting the finishing touches to their Melody card, while an alternative, Melody is in the works from a band of German Amiga hardware developers.

Melody is a 286 card for all Amigas, including the A1000 and also the A500 with a forthcoming interface. At the moment it's awaiting a full suite of software,

although it already has AHI (Audio Hardware Interface) drivers which ensure compatibility with a number of existing audio programs, including HiPacPlayer, Play16 and DellTracer.

Likewise, Melody is a Zorro card but it features a DSP with specific features for playing MP3's audio. Digital input and output are promised alongside analogue equivalents. Specific support for the Melody card via CrossMIDI SoundBridge is apparently in the works. More news as we get it.



Stateside

by Jason Compton



VIscorp: All Change

Carl Sassowich, original Amiga OS designer, has resigned as Director of Software for VIscorp. Citing intolerable management, among other things, Mr. Sassowich has since set out a broad list of goals for a future computer platform that would rectify the inefficiencies of modern computing.

In less dramatic fashion, I recruited as Communications Manager for VIscorp in mid-December. David Rosen, VP of Business Development, will take over the handling of Amiga inquiries for the company. Mr. Rosen is reachable at drosen@visnet.com.au.

New Toaster May

A new Nintendo-licensed quarterly publication is currently in the works. Details are currently sketchy, but the launch of the magazine is planned for early 1997, and it should be bi-monthly with a year.

The new magazine will be web-sited by the Amiga community as the long-running Amiga video magazine Video Toaster User and LightWave Pro have ceased publication. However, there has been the promise of a six-monthly issue of Video Toaster news and information in existing Miller Freeman video and graphics publications.

Already, some new publications are appearing to play the gas. Visual Inspirations of Tampa, Florida has announced a new, free online magazine to support users of the Video Toaster/Player system and Amiga Lightwave artists. It is a long-standing developer of tools for Video Toaster users. More information on their upcoming publication is available at <http://www.vi.com/~vinspire>.

Canada Show Success

Amiga Fest '96 went ahead as planned in London, Toronto, boasting exhibitors such as NewTek, Nova Design and AmFiix. CQ Amiga Magazine are glad to say that it enjoyed a large degree of success.

Amiga Fest '96, a subset of the larger PC-dominated Computer Fest '96 in Toronto, drew a host of North American exhibitors including a strong contingent of Canadian Amiga retailers. Notable among these were National Amiga, which recently expanded its status as one of the premier Amiga dealerships by merging with a London, Ontario highstreet dealer under the National Amiga name.

Phase 2 was on hand to show off the PowerPC evolution bar card as seen recently at the Cologne Computer '96 show in Europe (see last month's news section for more details), and to promote their A500 computer, still in early development in Germany. Directory Opus 5 developer, Jonathan Peltier and his publisher, King

Reasy of Oxford, were at the show all the way from Australia on the last leg of their worldwide tour. Paul Nolan was also at the show to help extol the virtues of the Samsara System.

The talk of the show was QuikPak, North American manufacturers of the Amiga A4000T. In addition to promoting their new 68060 accelerator card, the A4000, they had a pair of "concept machines" on display: the A4003L and A2600T.

The A4003L is a development of the portable Amiga concept first introduced in August by VIscorp on behalf of QuikPak at an Atlanta user group meeting.

The A2600T is based on the Eagle Pentium system with seamless switching between the Amiga running 68060 and the PC side running at Pentium speeds, all in an A4000T case. This show model had an LCD bolted into its side, allowing you to use it as a flat desktop machine (albeit a rather large one) with a built-in display, but it



is unclear if this innovation will make it to market.

QuikPak indicated to a number of people at the show that they were actively pursuing a bid for the Amiga assets from Eason's bankruptcy trustee, Dr. Herlihy.

The organizers of Amiga Fest, Amazing Software can be reached online at www.bag.net/~amazing. QuikPak can be reached online at www.amiga-wup.com/quikpak.

The World of Amiga '96 show, planned scheduled to take place two weeks after the November Amiga Fest at the same venue, was cancelled when it became apparent that the two shows would clash.

AMIGA FEST '96

High Spec Games US Gets Multisync

A new player, Aurora Works Inc, has entered the Amiga games scene, dedicated to developing quality products aimed at high spec machines.

Aurora Works Inc, has announced two titles for 1997. The first, Zone 96, is a strategy/action game with 64 levels of play and level-to-level action. The goal is to explore the game-world in search of Zone 96 by completing challenges and overcoming obstacles, sometimes with the help of your opponent. A shareware demo is scheduled for

January, while the full commercial release is set for March. The second, Demolish, is to be an action/adventure set in a dark future. Details are sketchy but the release is planned for Autumn '97.

Aurora Works are aiming their titles at highspec Amiga machines with 500 processors as a minimum. They also plan full support for the CyberGraphix video card standard and to take full advantage of the AGA chipset. More information on Aurora Works is available at www.auroraworks.com.



US Gets Multisync

Software Hut, a large and longtime Amiga dealer and distributor, have a significant quantity of Amiga Technologies' Microvise multiview monitors for sale.

After 47 returned their monitors (which it was no longer able to afford), Software Hut stepped in to take a number of them off Microvise's hands.

Software Hut will carry both the standard M1400 14" monitor and the high-spec M1704 17" monitor complete with digital controls. Planned prices are US\$470 for the 14" model and US\$790 for the 17" model.



New Wordworth

Wordworth, the World's most popular Amiga word processor, is now even better with the release of Wordworth® 6.

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A\Box: Future of Amiga?

A\Box: an Amiga-compatible super computer with awesome specifications. *CU Amiga Magazine* investigates this exciting new phenomena to find out what it will mean for your future.



How would you like one of these sitting on your desk? It's not an Amiga, it's not a Mac, it's not a PC. It's far ahead of all those machines: it's our impression of what Phase 5's stunning A/Box will look like when it rolls off the production line later this year. What you can't see from this picture is the absolutely awesome technical specification it boasts. Take a look at the Tech Specs panel on page 26 for a run-down of the best bits. It's a beast of a computer that sets out to deliver high-end professional power to the masses. Real-time video editing, multi-tracking audio facilities, real picture displays and a lightning fast internal CPU and internal architecture are all on the menu. And the price for all this and more? Phase 5 expect to give us all that for the amazingly low price of £1,200.

A/Box isn't a cheap desktop home computer to sit by the TV and run a few games and the occasional guest program. It has the potential to become a complete audiovisual workstation for the price of a low-end PC. It's planned to run the Amiga's operating system, which should ensure compatibility with Amiga software. It's been designed from the ground up, so unlike current PCs, its software won't waste resources trying to get around terrible bits left by ancient hardware designs.

With a design like that, if it gets the software support and interest from third-party hardware developers, it could revolutionise a string of computer-based industries,

working its way into TV and computer graphics production companies, music studios, professional video systems, DTP bureaux ... the list is endless. So far that's all speculation though. Whether or not it can fulfill its potential relies to a degree on the actions of its creators, Phase 5. So where has this machine come from, and just what is the philosophy behind it all?

Phase action

Phase 5 is outpoken MD, Muel Dietrich, has never made any secret of the fact that they were prepared to go it alone with a next generation computer in the spirit of the Amiga, whatever the fate of the official Amiga hardware. They've been keeping away behind the scenes on their secret A/Box project for some time now. Muel Dietrich summed up his sentiments to the A/Box:

"The A/Box project is the realisation of our vision of computing in the next century which is driven by and dedicated to the vision of the Amiga itself. We do believe computers still can be real cool stuff."

To get a feel for the kind of reception it will receive, we spoke to a number of prominent players in the current Amiga scene. Phase 5's conversations with Amiga enthusiasts and software developers, the hardware specifications have certainly impressed. Almost everyone agrees that if the A/Box is delivered as Phase 5 promises, they would make the move across to the new platform. Understandably there's

SILICON GRAPHICS
Computer Systems

...helping build a better dinosaur.

some reservation concerning vital details such as the degree of Amiga compatibility and third party developer support.

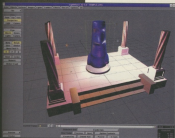
Hopefully the machine can avoid the chicken and egg situation that other new platforms are faced with by being able to run the extensive catalogue of Amiga software at improved performance over real Amigas.

A/Box looks poised to take on the crown of computer supremacy and as the possibly unbeatable silicon dinosaur.

DTP designs

Individuals involved in various areas of Amiga computing have expressed great enthusiasm for the hardware power decreed at their particular interests. Lars Holmwood from LH Publishing had some particular thoughts about the A/Box and its potential as a desktop publishing system:

"The A/Box should revolutionise DTP for Amiga owners. Some will see the end to slow AGA 6-bit screens to be replaced by a



A/Box is a great platform for 3D graphics. Note tonight it's not the lightening, even without its own video card.

"Funny thing about the A/Box is that for years I used to 'design' dream machines like it in my mind. It is truly a dream machine ..."

Carl Sassenrath - Director of Amiga "Etc.", Ex Software head of Williams (see review).

▲ Right: The CyberVision 64. Aramis, the main software, was designed in Phase 1. This is a report of Phase 1's system test, and shows the design team will be the first to the 68000.

Who are Phase 5?



To those in the know, while the Phase 5 announcement of the ABox specifying 68000 was stunning, it wasn't surprising. The German-based Oberon firm (near Frankfurt) has plodded on with developing high-powered expansion systems all through both of the two Amiga buy-out decades.

A relatively recent newcomer to the Amiga market, Phase 5 started out making the Amiga's first 20MHz 68034 card, the Z3 Fastlane. However they moved swiftly on to producing the first 68000 card for the A1000 with GMA. SCSI capability. They were also first to provide 68000 accelerators for the Amiga. Their 68000 range of acceleration also didn't stop at the 680 and moved on up to the incredible 68060 with the 68000 1280. They also created the Amiga's first 34-bit graphics board, the CyberVision.

Statistically, Phase 5 shipped Amiga hardware products to the value of £3.5 million in 1995 and since Christmas 1995 30,000 hardware products have been delivered. Their outside rise from a minor developer to a major player in the Amiga market has finally at the hands of the two owner-directors Gerald Carda and Wolf Derrich reached up over 20' product of the year' style awards from international Amiga journals. They've also climbed their fair share of CU Amiga Superstar ratings. More recently and behind the scenes, Phase 5 have been working on a plan to move to the Amiga from the 68000 CPU to the powerful 680C Power PC just like the Apple Macintosh has done. Phase 5 are also Macintosh developers which explains some of their expert ease with this type of technology.

At one stage, Phase 5 had an arrangement with Amiga Technologies to provide a drop-in Power PC upgrade for the 68-based 'Walker'. Though Amiga Technologies wound down with the financial failure of BeBox, Phase 5 continued to work on the Power PC.

Recently Phase 5 started shipping the so-called 'PowerUp' upgrade to Amiga developers. Initially an upgrade to CyberVision 68000/6800 accelerators, even the later low-end A1000 units possess both an 68000 CPU of some kind in addition to the mighty Power PC. This approach allows both professional and amateur Amiga developers to port their software gradually across to Power PC.

▲ Right: Such a good thing that the Amiga's success in the 680 with the PowerPC board. The Amiga team has been a steady presence.



flexible system where you can choose a display up to 24-bits containing video data in RGB, CMYK and YUV formats. Combine this with the processing power of such a beast, its unified memory system, and some involved in DTP or graphics work will at last have a machine to run on it when the ABox is released. I can't wait."

The Macintosh running the industry standard DTP software, Quark Express, has stretched the machine into a profitable niche. However the Mac hardware is fairly primitive and the operating system is a less productive non-multitasking affair. The ABox will have video display hardware and



▲ Right: The right software. After such a rocky start, the Amiga team has now moved on to the 68000.

"This is the kind of machine which I can believe in for the future. Phase 5 may not be the fastest in bringing a product to the market, but they always did what they announced."

Michael Holtermann, Ex Developer Support Manager for Amiga Technologies.



networking capabilities to put into the top of the range Power Mac to share, and for a better price according to Phase 5. What's more, there'll be an Amiga style operating system to boot, increasing productivity through multitasking and a better user interface. At that's needed then is a port of Quark Express or at least some other DTP package with the same level of power. It seems to be seen if the ABox will elevate the big developers in the same way as it has Amiga enthusiasts.

Eager anticipation

Things are already looking good, though with the Amiga's major remaining developer keenly interested in porting their packages initially to the PowerUp upgrade for standard Amigas and then later to the ABox. Harold Woodall of Nova Design Inc., creators of the superb ImageFX image processing software had this to say:

"The prepared hardware specifications are exciting. Speaking as just another Amiga owner I think the biggest issues will be Amiga compatibility - other true compatibility or design philosophies. We are considering porting ImageFX to the ABox but it's still too early to know what move Nova Design might make."

Mr Woodall reflects many of our concerns but finishes on a positive note by going on to say:

"We're also quite interested in buying Phase 5's PowerUp PPC board. This board addresses current Amiga's quite nicely. We look forward to these as well since they can provide a path for present Amigas to

So what's it got then? Here are the technical specifications

► **Pharmacology** 124 | **Q124**

Up to a theoretical 100MHz maximum, the N-Line is well poised to move with Motorola's Pentium heart. Multiple CPUs are even possible.

- 1200-hall high performance Unified Message Architecture

Memory access speed is a factor in CPU, disk and video/animations performance. The A-Star's 180MHz bus with SDRAM memory can manage an incredible 1.4 Gbytes/sec, says

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Further PCs get by with a processor bus clock of 33MHz (not the CPU clock rate), the A/B box starts with 100MHz, by sharing access to the system.

* Team Zehnfeldt verliert 0:1.

for one but two video output systems, one for externally high true-colour monitors and the other for video-work which may be penboxed. On-screen windows can be viewed from either using different image types (RGB or YCrCb) or

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Each of these outputs at CD quality (44.1 kHz) is 16-bit but can be real-time mixed for an infinite number of outputs.

mixed channels per output. The HMM DSP-4850 can be used to further process the audio.

^a These values are based on the following assumptions:

Full digital quality TLP 4:2:2 inputs allow very high quality video grabs to be processed. Combined with the SAME DSP-BASIC unit, they could be mixed in real time for Video Postcard style effects.

■ **Thompson, J. A., and Thompson, R. W.**

Standard 14-bit audio inputs for every day to CD quality recordings.

■ **LEGAL AFFAIRS** www.legalaffairs.com

As standard can drive LCD screens like laptops pointing towards a portable. A lot being introduced with ease. Also fairly for the desktops from-panel LCD idea as not our own concept either.

The high performance card standard for the PC comes to the A/Bux allowing the button of cheap third party hardware if any of it is needed.

^a General 100-hour CEU course

Fluorcing at 6000Hz, this lens can be used for universal low-speed applications which need up to 10200Hz transfer rates. Also known as the hacker's lens.

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An even extremely high speed interface standard supporting up to 64 devices, long cable lengths and up to 100 megabits/s transfer rate. Especially useful for digital video cameras and future devices.

■ **THE NEW YORK TIMES** (1992) "The New York Times has been the most powerful force in the country to bring the world's attention to the plight of the Chinese people."

The Florida Area Management Engine is a custom Digital Signal Processor which can process audio/video data in real time for synthesis and effects. 3D graphics will also benefit greatly and you could even have circular windows.

[illegible]

Phases II go back to their roots with a built-in first (1994, 2000) experience.

1000

For the camera suite, A/Beta has a built-in ISDN module allowing dial-up or leased line access to the Internet and such hosts.

[illegible]

Running the whole show will be Phase II's operating system which is already 100% AmigaDOS Exec compatible, currently in testing. Advanced features such as built-in support for multi-processors will be added.

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Sharing advice

With the illiX, it boasts compatibility with the Amiga and the existing emulators base, whereas authors should find it straightforward to port and create new software on the platform. Understandably the developers we asked voiced concerns over developers tools being made available, in particular Magic User Interfaces were mentioned. If developer's support material such as the MUI graphical user interface library is posted to the illiXos then the same high level of AmigaWare support is virtually guaranteed. We tracked down the author of MUI, Stefan Stantz, to ask him about access to the illiXos.

"As far as MLL goes, I do intend to port MLL to other important successors of Windows."

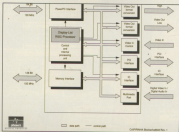
So will others follow suit? It's assumed that Phase 5's Amiga graphics entry system, CyberGraphX, will form the basis of the graphics API (Application Programmers Interface). This should ensure compatibility with the Amiga's existing 3rd-party software with CyberGraphX compatibility. For example, programmers connected to Phase 5 have already extended the AmigaOS devices capable to 386s.

The capability of the ALBox to house any last high-end Power PC CPUs and even multiple CPUs and the incredible graphics specification and video output

means that Phase II could target the graphics workstation market the Amiga once dominated. Silicon Graphics workstations may be seen as being too expensive and with an inferior operating system, not to mention the lack of third-party I/O tools that Amiga compatibility brings to the table.

Even if Phase III. Aotoga (competitive OS) fails to gain support in this niche, Mr. Contrak told us that they were working on

organising the drivers to allow a major Review of Links (probably Linux) to run on the AIXbox. Again with its networking capability and built-in 'Firewall' high speed communications, it could find a foothold as everything from the basis of a professional 'render farm' to a stand-alone graphics workstation to an Internet server. **Price:** £5,500-£40,000. **Web:** <http://www.ibm.com> (then search for 'aixbox').



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Part II: Professional 3D Graphics

What could be better than turning your beloved hobby into a career? If you think you're a bit handy with 3D graphics you could do worse than to give it a shot ...

How many times have you been watching a movie that seemed to be going nowhere, when all of a sudden it's transformed into an adrenaline-pumping thriller as a result of computer-generated special effects hitting the screen? Even though these cutting-edge effects are often there to bolster weak plots or gloss over wooden acting, the fact that they can make such a difference to a production just goes to show how important the whole computer graphics thing has become in the movie and TV business.

Since then amassed up all those years ago with its surreal computer-animated scenes, techniques and tools have advanced to such a degree that now we're never quite sure what is real and what is a bunch of cleverly arranged pixels. Only a few years ago computer

graphics in movies were limited to simulations of simple machines: spaceships, robots, anything except real life animate objects or creatures.

All that's changed now of course. Just look at the incredibly realistic creatures in the movie *Jurassic* (among others, the elephants were totally computer-generated) or of course *Jurassic Park*, still to be outclassed by anything Hollywood has produced since.

And then of course there's *Toy Story*, the *Steamboat Willie* of computer animation, and the relentless march of the sci-fi epic such as the *Star Trek* movies and *Independence Day*.

Maybe you'd like to get in on the action yourself? There's no reason why you shouldn't if you've got the necessary skills and talent. All you need is determination and some pointers ...

Suggested systems

You've probably already got all it takes to script, model, render and record your first video show reel, even if you don't know it. One of the Amiga's most useful aspects is its video output. *Newer Amigas* have a colour composite video output and all Amigas have a higher quality RGB video out to connect to a video recorder. This means you can record animations to video from any Amiga. *Utilities* such as *Viewtek* can play animations directly from a hard drive, so you don't need a lot of RAM but it helps. Both suggested systems below will be able to output large 3D animations to video tape.

Basic system

- Amiga 1200
- Hard drive
- VGA and RGB output
- *RenderWare* V20
- *Image 3.0*
- *Gamma* IV edition

Desirable system

- *10000-based Amiga*
- 64-bit *RenderWare* video card
- *LightWave 3D*
- High quality 1-100 RGB

animation, and modelling are the most widely referred to in the industry. This requires a lot of powerful hardware and software from several big software companies. For Amiga, only LightWave 3.0 could be used to create and bring it to life. From the concept art to the original sequences, the idea was to create a movie in 3D.



If you want to earn a living from 3D computer graphics, you should have figured this one out already. Your Amiga is of course an ideal tool on which to cut your rendering teeth. Using last month's Imagine 4.0 cover disk (give away here) plus with only an Imagine version 1 you can emulate just about anything you'll see on the silver screen, even if you would need a fair bit of RAM and preferably a digital video board (add-on system) to pump out full video resolution sequences in real-time (not such a pipe dream in fact).

Imagine 4.0 can handle every part of the

process, from wireframe modelling, through texturing with its own procedural features and brush maps, to animating with inverse kinematics, bones, and automated motion paths. While we can't claim Imagine is an industry standard with the movie business, it's the ideal system with which to learn the ropes and craft jaw-dropping showreels to present to the big players in Hollywood and other leading production companies.

Even the power of lesser Amiga set-ups can be harnessed to produce sequences that are sufficient to show off your talents. If you're trying to get a foot in the door of a computer animation production company, it's the underlying techniques and skills you should be displaying rather than the hardware you used to make your showreel. (See the "Suggested systems" box on page 20 for some examples.)

Perfect combination

All the best 3D graphics you see in the movies (and anywhere else for that matter) are the product of a combination of the producer's knowledge and use of the software/hardware and traditional animation and cinematography techniques.

Think about it: how many names do you see scrolling up the screen during the closing credits of an average movie? Lots, because no one person can be expected to be an expert in acting, storyboarding, directing, producing, make-up, wardrobe, photography, editing, sound recording, scripting, etcetera.

However, all of these skills and more are required to put together a major league movie, and if the computer-generated

sequences are to fit seamlessly with the live footage, they too must be planned and "directed" according to the same set of cinematic "rules". To this end, it's worth trying to apply many of these traditional movie-making techniques to your own sequences.

Computer animation opens up loads of new options which previously would have been too dangerous, too expensive or just plain impossible to achieve with conventional filming methods. If you're making your own limited animations and 3D movies, you can do what the hell you like, but if you want to be snapped up by the movie industry you should be careful not to get too unrealistic with your lighting, camera motion, paths and so on. Not every 3D sequence has to resemble a ride in the front of a roller-coaster. Even so, if you want to be taken on board

with a production company, it would probably be your modelling and animating skills that would be of interest. Specific direction of the 3D sequences, including its photography, would not necessarily be your domain, but it won't hurt to show an understanding of the bigger picture.

The right skills

Modelling and character animation are the two main skills to acquire and display. Unlike 2D work for games, which forces the use of very few polygons and simplistic structures (in a game everything must be re-rendered up to 50 times every second), 3D modelling for TV and the movies gives you more freedom to develop your objects with finer details, both in terms of the underlying wireframe mesh, and the textures and bump maps that adorn them.

Below are examples from *Art of Animation* and *Imagine 4.0* cover disk. The Amiga 500 is shown in the background.





Building up a complex animated model from scratch can be a daunting prospect for the beginner. It's not easy and neither is it something you're likely to pick up overnight. It can be tempting to take a nice big object from a CD-ROM and just use that in your own animations, but if you can't model your own then you're not going to have much to offer any prospective employer. Anyone can load an object, position it and hit the render button. However, if you want an insight into how models are built, then examining and modifying existing objects is a good place to start.

It's worth taking time and testing yourself to see if you can really cut when it comes to making highly realistic models. It might be a painful process, especially if our Amiga is on the slow side, but there's no going back presenting anyone with a bunch of half-baked characters and objects that have visible seams, sticky polygons and edges that don't match up. It would be better to fine-tune a couple of really impressive pieces that are more likely to get noticed and take notice.

Rich in texture

Good texturing can make the difference between an object that looks like a bit of computer graphics and something that is totally convincing. Procedural textures are great and can be perfect for some jobs, especially for very large scale renders of organic objects, but don't forget brush maps though.

The main problem with using brush maps is that they proliferate when viewed too close up, but they do give you the advantage of being able to scan or grab images and patterns from any source you have available. If you're working on a showered project to go onto VHS video you should be able to work around these problems. Brush maps are very useful, especially if you want to 'cheat' by making up some objects as part of the background scenery; just build a simple plane object and wallpaper it with your brush map. Make sure the camera doesn't get too close or view it from the side.

Brush maps are just as useful for those

big showered objects too. Remember that you can make your own brush maps from scratch, modify existing images or even render procedural textures to surfaces and then enhance them from within a paint package or image processor to be re-applied to an object within your 3D software.

Realistic animation

The first and possibly most important skill is animating your objects. This doesn't mean putting an object in a scene and setting a path for the camera to roam around as it tracks the central object. This is real animation, in which the various features of the object move realistically, with convincing inertia, speed, interplay with each other and a natural fluidity.

Depending on whether you're animating fictional cartoon type characters or going for convincing monsters (or even humans), you'll need to use different animation styles. For cartoons, get some books from the library that explain the concepts of bouncy, stretchy animation. For real life creatures you're best off examining filmed footage of the real things, or at least close relatives (you might want to study lizards for example in preparation for a dinosaur animation).

If you're really confident you could have a crack at modelling and animating a human. Now that's a challenge and a half. Beware though, if you can't pull it off, don't expect people to tell you "it's good, considering...". No-one is going to be impressed by a sequence that stars a crash test dummy playing the part of Arnold Schwarzenegger (although the 3D model's acting might be a bit of an improvement - only joking Arnold).

Originality

When you're starting out, mimicking those at the top of the trade is a natural thing to do, and can be a valuable part of learning the ropes. However, it's original ideas that will get you noticed. Look at it from a prospective employer's point of view. If they get a showered through the post and it takes all the effects and techniques in their latest production or uses the flavour of the month theme, why should they be interested in you? They could do that themselves. If you can impress them with a trick or an effect they've not seen before, or do something much better than it's been done before you'll get their attention and immediately command some respect.

Spinning corporate logos probably won't raise many eyebrows. Any rendering system worth its salt can impart a flare, texture it, bevel it and wrap it through a set of gymnastic moves with little more than a couple of mouse clicks.

Above all, stick with it and if you really are sure this is what you want to do, you'll probably get there in the end.

Thanks to Jeff Ransinghe and Pure Artwork for their help with this feature. ■

Tony Hangan

Your best foot forward

The way you present yourself and your work is critical. Even when someone is actually reviewing new stuff, the chances are that they will not have much spare time to spend to look through applicants' work. Make it easy for them. VHS video tape is the best way to present a showered. Don't bring out your showered with long credits and inter-titles that take up and down over the course of a few minutes. Cut all that out, bar a few seconds containing all your details (don't worry, they will have a pause button on their VCR) and cut to the chase with short and snappy sequences that show off all the best points of your models and animations.

Render your showered to full screen size if you have the time, CPU power and memory, but if not then don't be too concerned about using a smaller screen size. VHS won't make perfect copies of your animations, so using HAM or HAM-2 screenmodes will be fine, and allow for a high output frame rate and good colour depth.

Colour print-outs of your work should also accompany your showered and covering letter. These will have an instant impact and can be especially important if you are submitting work 'cold' in a situation where the recipient may not be able to watch your showered thesis and then. Remember to put your name, address, phone number and any email details on everything you submit.



4 The Internet is one way to advertise creative, technical and design opportunities and you will see them with any major search engine - see



Great news for games fans: we've got the exclusive cover disk and review of Minskies Furballs for you, this issue. And Microprose make a welcome return to the Amiga.

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Previews



Alien Presence:

Dawn of the Sixth Sun

■ **Date for release:** March ■ **Developer:** Apex Systems

Remember *Ultima* - excellent strategy game? What about its much better sequel?

K2407 Yeah, I loved those games, but we haven't seen anything as good as the *Ultima* for ages now. However, that may all change as Dave Kirk of Apog Systems has just shown me a very early demo of his new game in development, *Alpha Prime*. Dave of the Scott Fox ITD254. Even at this stage



POSS looks like the game that will take you from where it's commonplace to where it's downright mind-blowing. The game puts like *Utopia* and *Galaxy* on the table for you to build, explore, and conquer a vast reach of space and for your intergalactic colony to develop on one of 150 planets, some more than 200 star systems. With that in mind you must be successful in coordinating your resources by building structures, giving your empire suitable an economy, defending yourself against alien onslaughts and tracking astronomical events like comets, eclipses, and supernovas. Just like the areas found in *Ti's* *Balance* 50 Miles of all the hard stuff is blown away by the



Cave himself, but it will probably be a while before we see it in its final form, as it's a long way off from completion. It looks like DICE could well give Arnie's games players what they want, as this is

possibly their most ambitious project yet. *CJ Arriva Magazine* will definitely find out more over the next few months when we shall uncover the rest in a full review as soon as possible. ■

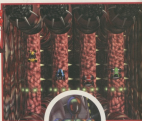
Mark Forbes

Burnout

1000

Downloaded from <http://www.sagepub.com> at

Vulcan moves away from IBM Amigas stick! Vulcan Software, the company infamous for catering for IBM designs, are choosing to see 1987 in by releasing a game that is AGA only and needs at minimum of 640k to run. It's a refreshing change and a welcome one, and hope



remains important
displayed in order that
with different types
of cases.

Burnout looks good, graphically, so far. We're looking forward to getting the finished version in for review next spring. It

They mentioned there is a demo of this game on this month's cover disk CD so you

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David H. Gustafson, *Editor*, *Journal of Management Education*

1000



are exactly
are
AM02 owners don't
right, Valheim are not
you just yet, it's just
their latest game.
out looks like it is
to be very high.
A fantastic car
racing game it
promises lots of
fast-paced action
as well as multi-
player delights. Up
to four players
will be able to battle
the against one
other in one of the
space-age race
tracks. There should
also be a shop facility
for you to swap up
your car. Incidentally
Maze has offered

Minskies Furballs

■ Price: £19.99 ■ Publisher: Binary Emotions ☎ 01722 716074

I taut I saw puddy cat, I did, I did.
Too right you did mate. You saw
lots of different coloured ones in
this excellent Tetris clone.

Tetris fans - all your birthdays have come at once. And even if you're not a Tetris fan you will be one after a few bouts of this game. *Minskies Furballs* is one excellent Tetris clone. Even the NMS boys who use these on office walls seemed a little bit impressed by it and kept muttering something about Kirby's *Avanture* on the SNES.

Choose your weapons

It's bigger, it's colourful and it's easier to play. All you've got to do

is manipulate the incoming coloured blocks (like puddy cats called gar-bled) into marching groups of four or more. Each time you do this,

you send a fish symbol or little grey blocks down on your opponent's side tracking up their on-screen as they've got to get rid of them.

As well as grouping your blocks together you've got a variety of weapons at your disposal. There are three offensive weapons and three defensive ones. A red bar at the bottom measures your progress through the game and so does



▲ It's harder to check than the large board will get's bigger you need to know that you're using. There are also some other weapons (like the fish).

your weapon status. Weapons begin with the bombs and then go on to items such as phaser, sawsaw and shield. To select one just push up and fire. Getting rid of the grey blocks is the main way to get any weapons and it will flash up on screen which one you're currently got. Bombs are handy for getting yourself out of trouble and freeing up some space. I am disappointed though, that there isn't a way to send a bomb over to your opponent so you could mess up their game.

That gripe aside, control is easy enough. Press down on the joystick to speed up the blocks, up to select weapons and left and right to move the blocks around. Likewise on the keyboard use left and cursor keys to move either way, right Arrage and right alt to rotate the blocks.

Some of the weapon selection is also a bit hit and miss though. When you select a bomb it's quite straightforward - target appears and you get a countdown of five to select the part you want to

detonate. The phaser weapon, which blows in straight lines, is harder to find. It seems to be slightly off screen so a bit of guess work is needed here.

A bit of a character

There are eleven tables in all to complete and each table has its own figurehead. This doesn't really affect the game much but adds a bit of variety to the levels. The one with the three bears is a bit strange and offputting as the title picture of the bears keeps coming in and out for some unexplained reason. This is a bit hard on the eyes.

The avalanche weapon that your opponent sends your way every now and then doesn't help your eyesight either as it shakes the screen around vigorously for a few minutes. In addition, on some levels, the background graphics blur in a bit too much with the blocks. I found myself missing connections because I couldn't



▲ Now you can also see what you've got to do in your game. The winning team is the one with the most blocks. There is only one table in the game.

Tommy Gun

■ Price: £14.99 ■ Publisher: Mutation Software ☎ 01705 672616

Fresh fruit and vegetables are normally good for aren't they? Not in this game, they're not.

Little Tommy Tucker, the mild mannered tomato, is happily vegging out in front of the TV when his tranquil world is rocked by one phone call. His mate, the Big Cheese phones him with some shocking and disturbing news: aliens have invaded and transformed their universe into one of mayhem. Tommy, enraged by this news, vows to rid the world of these pests and sets off to blow the boulder-balls away

through five different worlds, blowing away all the evil creatures that are trying to kill you. To stop yourself from turning into tomato soup, position the cursor over your intended victim and keep firing. You've also got some bombs at your disposal for a little bit of extra backup. Just press shift and L to set it off. And remember to keep your ammunition item and health levels topped up by firing your friends, the little bean-shaped creatures trapped in supermarket trolleys.

Another planet

There are four worlds, supermarket city, paradise island, foreground attractions, the five forests to get through before you reach space mountain where the aliens that caused all the trouble in the first place are. Tommy Gun is linear so you've got to complete each world before moving onto the next. Luckily, there is a password system, so you don't have to go through any previously completed levels. Is it a cheat? Well, for each world, there's five same recurring theme: you scroll by lots of names and try to kill or be killed before you reach the first end of level boss. The only difference between each level is the sprites and the backdrops are different. For example, in the supermarket level you've got things like onion carrots and gung-ho gerkins to contend with against a scrolling backdrop of stocked shelves, fridge freezers and the like.

While in the foreground attractions set up, the carrots and backdrop are swapped for ghoulish aliens, scary ghost trains and all manner of foreground sundries.



■ That old place does the absolute best job of how scary this character looks in many of the little options in the trolley to get people who, maybe because of some lines.

Too easy

It all sounds crazy and fun, so far doesn't it? Well, it is but Tommy Gun is just too easy. You can whizz through the five worlds in one sitting. There isn't enough in the game though to make you want to go back to it. I found it incredibly easy to complete and when you do finish the game you receive a special cheat mode for infinite lives and ammunition which, to be honest, would make the game last about five minutes. The end of level bosses are laughable, who could take a huge alien or giant lemon firing ice-pops at you actually? A few lobbed grenades finished them off within seconds.

I did get some enjoyment out of TG. However, it was too easy in some places and stupidity hard in others, so there was no way to plan any strategy. I also didn't like the lack of a difficulty curve, it really could have done with getting more and more difficult as you progressed through. Also, in two-player mode, the scrolling nature of the game made it too restricted

so you tend to get in each other's way. Not good.

Tommy Gun would probably suit younger players as it is quite cute. I find it bizarre that the game is dedicated to someone who died in service. Maybe it's some kind of statement about the futility of war. If the levels were a bit harder and more varied then TG wouldn't be a bad little game as it stands it is too easy to beat for more than couple of hours of enjoyment. ■

Lee Collins



■ Fully armed and ready? This recent update has probably the hardest to get through.



■ As we see angry carrots are on the shelves, look like little Tommy is getting in trouble for some reason (in a great way) type event.

TOMMY GUN

■ recommended version: 1.0
■ number of slots: 1
■ size: 100
■ level list available: no

graphics: 80%
sound: 70%
playability: 70%
overall: 60%

Scrolling shoot 'em up which is too easy to beat.

60%



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Fighting Spirit ECS

■ Price: £18.95 ■ Publisher: New ◯ +43 1 60 740 80

Last month we looked at the AGA version, now the ECS and CD versions are here to prove themselves.

Though our good old charm the Amiga has always had the advantage over consoles such as the SNES and Megadrive as far as charming out great strategy romps, RPGs and

adventure games goes, it's never really been a machine that's got completely to grips with the genre of the nighty beat 'em up. *Shadow Fighter* was perhaps one of the more memorable recent (ahh) attempts,

while the Moral Kombat titles remain about the closest thing to an Amiga beat 'em up 'legend' we've had.



▲ Here's where the beat 'em ups get a chance to test to special skills stages.

Don't give up

Of course, that's not to say that various Amiga games makers haven't tried - goodness no - but though many technological breakthroughs have been achieved on the Commodore machine, finding a way of shifting Street Fighter-like sprites around at a half-decent speed with a half-decent appearance has always eluded

Come get some!

Should you want to get hold of a copy of *Fighting Spirit*, you'll have to get in touch with Neo Software Productions, GmbH, Business Park, Vienna - Boxed CD Wienerbergstr. 7, 1030 A-1100 Wien, Austria. Tel: +43 1 60 740 80 Fax: +43 1 60 740 80 8 Email: neo@info.co.uk WWW: <http://www.info.co.at/neowhat4blinker/parvel/>



the various coding geniuses!

However, all is not lost, as every once in a while some unknown coder turns up with something quite cool and those of you that read EU Amiga Magazine last month will no

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Just have read with some interest Urs Collin's review, last issue, of a European CD. *Fighting Chance* (giving it the name of *Fighting Spirit*). Though I scored reasonably well, it's proving difficult to actually get our hands on thanks to a lack of UK distributors (however, *Goodfellas* may be sticking it very soon, as well as your favourite *as seen on TV* final cut version) and was also only available for enhanced machines — ah, until you do it.



disk lighter but remaining thank-fully serious. You will have your last main streamers in three hours, each leading with special moves and various attack styles.

As captured by their various attractive backgrounds and avatars. The speed of play is pleasantly pliable, and the intelligence of the CPU-controlled opponents is conducive to enjoyable game competition. The double English in places is always good for laugh. The leading animations are also funny and fast. A little gun firing backs out of the butt, no prizes for guessing what that's supposed to represent.

Simplicity

The new AQA version is here, loading less presentational goodies, and loading in all code.

Conductivity conditions

Along with the EGS version of *Fighting Spirit*, we've also received the CD version of the game for review this month. However, seeing as how it's identical to the AGA game (albeit with a somewhat lack of the disk swapping theme of an AGX installing had to endure!) we thought we'd save ourselves the trouble of using up one of the valuable game review pages by handling the review in here. So ... at well it's basically the same as the AGA review from last month (and not a million miles from the EGS version being tested here). So that's that posted there.



FIGHTING SHORT U.S.

QUESTION 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> worldwide service 100% <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> number of birds 4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> food 100% <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bird that resembles you
QUESTION 2	graphics 75% sound 75% text editing 100% clipboard

Answer **NOPE N.O.P.E.**
A. is interpreted as
"although the person
"Amiga" did the
other maps.

82

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Budget Games

MicroProse re-releases from Goldhill Leisure © 01302 890000

Good news, Microprose are back on the Amiga scene. Here are four games they are currently re-releasing at knockdown prices.

Special Forces

Price: £14.99

Special Forces is a shoot 'em up simulation from yesterday. You must guide your band of merry men through a series of hair-raising missions which can range from assassination through to rescue or sabotage. You've got fifteen missions to complete and your strategy is up to you: you can select your team either on the basis of each man's stats or how well he does in actual battle. Overall, it's an engaging game with functional graphics and an OK control system, however the missions tend to become tedious after a while and the game is a bit on the slow side. It's also too easy to get wiped out by one enemy soldier. You might be better off waiting for Fields of Glory which is due for a re-release soon.

55%

UFO

Price: £14.99

Now here's a game everyone loves. A strategy game with lots of action, you control a special force team, X-ones, which must do battle against alien invaders from outer space. There's lots of fun to be had with this game. As well as equipping your base and engaging in a bit of war on two with the enemy you get to carry out scientific experiments for the purpose of research on the remaining corpses. In all, UFO is a great game and though it can be a bit slow during loading time it is still one of the classics and if you haven't got it already you can't afford not to get it at this price.



93%

Colonization

Price: £14.99



When Colonization was released a lot of people mistakenly thought it was the sequel to Microprose's magnificent strategy sim, Civilization. In reality, it was completely different. However, though not as good, perhaps, as Civilization, Colonization still held its own. The aim is to lead your country across the seas where you across land trading with other civilizations to build up your position. Once you've established a degree of affluency and self-sufficiency then it's up to you to go it alone and look after your own people. I still prefer the war aspect in Civilization but Colonization is a worthwhile game and worth checking out at this price.



85%

Impossible Mission 2025

Price: £14.99

If you've never played the first game or the sequel let me explain. Impossible Mission was originally an arcade puzzle game where the aim was to infiltrate evil scientist Elvin Armander's security headquarters and prevent him from blowing up the world. You had to race against time, picking up useful items along the way and trying to avoid breakish robot inhabitants. IMP2025 improved upon the original in terms of sound and graphics but the game still remains the same and is very easy to get through. It's still fun in places though, especially on the fantastic musical track. The original 8-bit classic is included here as well. What a bang!

80%

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Reach for the stars

Here's the man who put the kapoww into karate and whose name is synonymous with Snooker and Pool - Mr. Archer Maclean.



Name: Archer Maclean.
Age: 24.
Born: Bayton on Sea.
Occupation: Long standing programmer.
Biggest Success: Jimmy White's Snooker, Archer Maclean's Pool, International Karate and Wn.



▲ This pool was huge (Archer Maclean's Pool) here are some screenshots of it being won.



▲ This Snooker was all broken down from Archer Maclean.

CM: How did you first get into writing games?

AM: "Long story. Twenty years ago I used to build and program my own machines. Then I saw Asteroids, Missile Command, Defender, and I thought, I could do that too!"

CM: Your game, Wn was an instant classic on the Amiga. How do you rate current games of this type?

AM: "Today's games are great technical achievements, let down by crap gameplay. It is still good fun to play, even now."

CM: At the time of its release, did you anticipate that Jimmy White's Snooker would be such a huge success?

AM: "Yes but I was confident. It just kept selling and selling. You can still buy it now. However, I'm still having trouble getting money for it."

Publishers are now more reluctant to back an untested game idea, what they know a lesser commercial risk will be to enhance an older title. It's tested formula. It's also easier at retail to sell something familiar."

CM: In your opinion has the Amiga games industry in the 1990s progressed or regressed in terms of quality releases?

AM: "Hmmm, it's probably gone backwards because lots of technically nice games are the norm today where gameplay has been forgotten. I think good games have to be easy to pick up but hard to master. They should draw you in within a few minutes so that you want to do more play, rediscover more etc and have a random element to avoid boringly similar game flow. They must not require 500 pages of manual. The control method should be totally thought out, with immediate sonic or visual feedback, with in game help screens if required. The player should never be left wondering what to do or what's he doing wrong, and the game environment must have no holes."

CM: How do you see the Amiga games industry evolving over the next few years?

AM: "Struggling on, unfortunately. It really depends on how good the market is supported in hardware and software."

CM: What would you say is your greatest achievement out of the

games that you have written on the Amiga?

AM: "My Archer Maclean's Pool title was the best produced game - especially on the A1200. It - and Snooker were not far behind though."

CM: Is there a chance you might write games for the Amiga again?

AM: "I would like to go back to it because I really enjoyed it so much, but probably not - things have moved on a bit."

CM: What kind of testing impression has the Amiga caused to you as a programmer?

AM: "Nice feedback, especially from a programming point of view. Ordinary people could buy it, get into it and learn how to program it. That's where many of today's people come from. At present, this entry point doesn't exist, if I mean, PCs cost loads and are a real total nasty pain to program. Windows 95 is not so hot and prevents you from exceeding all that hardware. So where are the next batch of programmers going to come from?" ■

Mark Forbes

"Today's games are great technical achievements, let down by crap gameplay."

CM: Dropzone has to be one of your silliest games ever but it never appeared on the Amiga, why?

AM: "Publishers at the time didn't want it. Play they were so short sighted."



By Ben Douglas, Games Director

Snip Tips



Ola Amiga amigos! A bit of Spanish sunshine there for no reason whatsoever. And non forgetimo, there's a free Hit Squad game to any printed tipsters. Esta completamente babido!

WORMS

Team 17

Stephen Ingham from Lancashire has found a secret menu for this incredible multi-player game. Simply press escape with the game paused and you engage Sudden Death mode (which the manual says is PC-only) as well as make the game a draw, replay the game, and quit.

This cheat can be very useful if you're in a bit of a rush as, instead of setting a time for each round, you can simply allow as much time as you want, and then take it into Sudden Death mode. Coolio.

CIVILIZATION

MicroProse

John Collins from Springfield (and I bet THAT'S getting a right old laugh now that The Simpsons is on telly!) has a secret if fairly cheat for the excellent and down-right absorbing God-em. However, this cheat only seems to work for the Warlord, Prince, King and Emperor games but not the chiefdom.

Anyways... as is always the case in games like these, there's never enough money to sort your cities but properly giving the computer the edge but with the following cheat you're laughing. If you've built two or three cities with the power of four or more, and have opened a fair amount of land space around you, save the game to an empty disk and take note of whether it's 'civ2d2.sav', 'civ2d3.sav', etc. and the year.

Now examine the save file with a hex editor (Mr Collins used Hexzap himself) and find

position 13C is the first sector. Now change all positions from 13C to 14B to 7's (ie type in a 7 for each position. WARNING! DO NOT do this on your hard drive, use a spare floppy).

Save your file back out to floppy and the next time you load your save file you should have an amazing 30,000 credits. Now buy everything for your cities as fast as you can to gain the advantage over your enemies and reduce your losses to zero to get technical advances much quicker. Basically, SPEND SPEND SPEND! (ignore messages such as 'London can't support militia' because as you get stronger and richer these will disappear).

Once you've gained control, demo using this cheat you can use it on older saved games that you may have abandoned in frustration.

Another tip is to keep going until you are able to buy

diplomats, then use these to buy opposing armies or invite armies closer to revolt and come over to your side. This makes the game less frustrating and much more satisfying.

ALFRED CHICKEN

Mindcape

Now here's a cracking little platformer I'd forgotten all about! Unlike Mr S James of Kent, who'd this to, saved us all that by typing HILFMARK on the title screen, Dave 1.0 select the level you want. Nice one!

FRONTIER

Gamesoft

Ah, the old chart Frontier. We haven't had one of these for a while, but Craig Rooney from Leiridgova has such a cracking cheat that I just had to tell you

about it! Right, go to any planet with a docking station and buy one tonne of rubbish. Leave the planet and hyperspace to another system (this is just to avoid being fined for illegal dumping. Now make sure that you're in free flight and move your cursor to just below the icon for jet-setting rubbish BUT DON'T CLICK ON THE ACTUAL RUBBISH ICON. By clicking here the on-board computer thinks you're jet-setting waste when in fact... you aren't jet-setting anything at all! As a result, your ship gets loads of extra cargo space and, when used with the various other Frontier cheats, allows you to arm up with Large Plasma Accelerators and thousands of Shield Generators - making you virtually indestructible. The read-out for your current cargo hold will go up as the report, but hey, who cares! ■



Special thanks to the multiplayer game community...



More lots of extra cargo space to be had in Frontier...

AND THAT'S YOUR LOT!

Indeed, that's all you're getting this month, but thanks as always to those of you have been sending in all your ranking cheats - keep it up! And don't forget, there's a free Hit Squad game for every tipster who gets their cheat printed, so let us know what machine you have and what game you might like. Until next month...



VAMP

Hello boys are you pleased to see me? Or would you like to feast your eyes on much more of me than this tiny picture?

KGB

I'm stuck in the stuffy room with the man in chains. I have tried to use the tape to set off the alarm, but I keep getting killed. Help me, I'm so sick of being copped up in this room.

Your kindly KGB Agent!

Sticky as you it would have been helpful if you had at least told me what chapter you are referring to! Let's guess that we are in chapter two, the room you are talking about is the hotel room and the man is Chaplain. In which case you need to use the tape-recorder to save yourself. Set it to the "voice-overdub" of option and when Chaplain makes you in the morning and tells you to do something, do as you are told.

When you are talking to him in the bathroom use a dialogue option that contains a word which activates the tape recorder. When the tape starts it will attract the bad guy far enough for you to slug him. Take the gun in his pocket and digger him with the remote.

Monkey Island

I'm stuck in part one of Monkey Island. I've made it past the pools and into the mansion. I've been that out of the canyon, had a sword lesson and talked with the prisoner. I don't know what I should do now?

L. Christensen, Winfield.

Adventure Helpline

The key to your predicament is the prisoner in the cell. Give him the breath misty and ask him if he has a file. Give him the popper repellent and he'll give you a piece of rope with a file in it. Take the file to the Governor's mansion and walk to the geyser hole.

Flashback

How do you get through the doors at the castle of the north?

R.G. Clapton, Market Harborough.

For the life of me I can't remember. However, just in case that I do know something about this game here are the level codes which should go a long way towards making life a lot easier for you: JAGGED, BANTMA, TONYED, COMBEL, SATIA, FACUDA, ANYNE, EASITE, FUSSE, KILLAN, MAREAL, CAPROL, ABTNUF, MAUNER, ZZZAP, SEWITE, SOLUST, MARUC, BENDER, NEFTON, NO RAG, BELUDA.

Dreamweb

I can kill Gharin Underwood but then I don't know where to go or what to do. Please give me a helping hand so that I can finish the game?

J.A. Phillips, Staffs.

Once again I'm not getting much help from you lot. Assuming that you have gotten past the Dreamweb section, walk to Underwood, talk to her and then use the gun. Return to the Dreamweb and walk to the dagger for the latest gossip. Go to the bathroom left corridor and use the jar left corridor. Use the plinth with the key again. Return to the barrel screen and go to the raised church. Walk to the gate, remember it, then use the wire return to it. You're in!

Kings Quest III

I can't seem to get spell number 3, The Cat Spell, right. I'm on

page 209 in the spell book but the spell goes wrong at the end.

E.D. Roberts, Chesh.

Then you are a lucky wizard! You must create the Cat Spell because you need it to get rid of the pesky wizard. In fact you will need to assemble the cat castle into a bowl of porridge before the wizard will let it but that's another story. All I can say, in that you must have all of the ingredients before you start and you must follow the spell directions EXACTLY or it will go wrong and you will die. It isn't that hard, even I managed to follow the recipe and I can't hold water without burning it!

While I'm talking about this game, let me help out Dale McCurdy who can't find the magic wand that you need to create spells. The wand is in the cage and the key to the cage is on top of the wardrobe in the Wizard's bedroom.

Curse of Enchantia

I am stuck in the ice fields of Enchantia. I've got money, a popper, two snowballs, a fishing rod and a magnet on a rope. How to I get out of the ice fields and back to the village?

C. Lowery, Dublin.

Use your darling, wandering around in the icy fields with two snowballs is not a lot of fun is it? You need someone to take you home and back you up in a warm rifle and I'm just the girl to do it.

Here is what you must do in the snow world. Pick up plank and go down to the next screen. Throw the plank, pick up the fish and go down to the next screen. Go right, pick up the diamond, wear the diamond, fire right and up to the next screen. Take the fish to the fishman and pick up the rod. Go to the screen with dead of ice and fight with the fishing rod.

Pick up the stone. Wander around

screen until you get to the frozen. Pick up the snowballs and fight with the snowballs. Go back to the first screen and find the sleeping snow lion. Walk over the snowlion to the other side and shoot him. After exiting from the cave, go to the boat, and jump in it.

When you are back on the shore, throw the stone and the friendly dragon will give you a lift to the next world.

Beneath a Steel Sky

I have entered the subway and been devoured by the monster in the wall. I also can't get past the knight that protects the door when you are transported to the line. What should I do?

Stephen Branch, Barnet.

Just like me, the monster likes the dark. All those bright lights are very bad for the complexion, and when you are ready and covered in scars, you worry about things like that. If you search the wall nearby you'll find a light switch you can use to scare him away. Don't worry about the creature tonight as you do not have the object you need to get past him just yet. What you need is the Divine Mask. ■

If you've got a little problem with your favourite RPG or adventure game and would like Vamp to help you out, drop a line to: Nampers, CU Amiga Magazine, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC2R 3ALL.



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If you thought the Amiga scene was going to die down after Christmas, we're glad to prove you wrong. Feast your eyes on this lot.

54 Wordworth 6 Office

Digital's latest word processor offering reviewed, in and out of the Wordworth 6 Office application CD bundle.

58 AVM Modem

Using the Spantaster 33600 V1 modem, we preview the shareware AVM Suite for fax and voice mail answering machine capability.

60 Blitz Support Suite

The popular Blitz Basic games and application development package gets a boost from this third-party upgrade. Full review here.

61 SX32 Pro

No longer is the CD32 limited to a 68030. We check out the SX32 Pro expansion which includes a nifty built-in 68030.

62 Audio H/W Interface

You've heard of reconfigurable graphics but AH offers the same for sound. Gaining increasing support, we take a first look.

64 Turbo Calc 4.0

The latest Turbo Calc upgrade challenges Final Calc for the throne as best spreadsheet on the Amiga. Just how does it shape up?

66 PD Scene

The Amiga scene continues to buzz with activity and here's another batch of games, demos and PD utilities to prove it.

70 PD Utilities

This month we check out a shareware directory utility that promises to rival the big boys. Many more choice utilities also examined.

72 CD-ROM Scene

Insatiable with high quality CD-ROM releases, this month we've special expanded coverage of what's hot on CD-ROM.



SX32 Pro II



DrawStudio 1.04



AH9



Turbo Calc 4.0

TechScene

Wordworth 6 Office

■ Price: £49.99/Upgrade £34.99 ■ Developer: Digita International
 ■ Supplier: Digita International ☎ 01385 270 273

CD Version

Four quality packages on one CD at a snip of price. Are Digita taking a leaf out of CU's book? Let's see.

Without a doubt, the CD player is certainly one of the hottest peripherals for Amiga owners. It seems like almost everyone has one nowadays. Software publishers are realising this and are starting to put out favourite programs on CD. One of the first to do so, is long time Amiga supporter, Digita International. Their CD Wordworth 6 Office is also available on floppy disk, although for this review we'll look at it in the CD version.

What's on it?

No prizes for guessing that the Office pack is based around version 6 of Wordworth, but there's a lot more that many people's favourite word processor on the CD. You also get Database 2, Organizer 2 and Money Masters 4.



▲ You can do almost any task types of documents, tables, graphics, imported into Wordworth the file can be saved, printed, and other things in Wordworth itself using the National Bank.

New features

- Polymorphic Drawing Tool
- Supplier Polymorphic Drawing Tool
- Curve Drawing Tool
- Freestyle Drawing Tool
- Drawstudio
- Password Protection
- Improved RTT Support
- More Access commands



▲ You have the file for installing the program, but it is a shame that you can't edit the steps when doing so.

All this for an upgrade price of just under £35 seems like unbelievable value. But is it? Keep reading and you can make up your own mind.

As already mentioned, the Wordworth 6 Office pack comes with four tightly tested programs, most of which have been around for a year or two on floppy disk. The only new upgrade on the disc is Wordworth 6. The Office CD has two versions of the same programs, one in German, the other in English. All these programs will only run from hard disk. They do not run from CD and there is no mention made of installing them onto floppy disk. The latter isn't perhaps important because if you have a CD, the chances are, you'll also have a hard drive.

The reason, I guess, the programs don't run from CD is because a number of files have to be installed onto the Workbench partition of your hard drive and these files will differ from person to person. In other words, although Digita could have simply installed the program on CD, there would still have been a substantial amount of files that needed to go onto hard drive, so it makes sense to place



▲ Digita's elegant polygons are very simple to create and can have any number of sides.

the whole thing on hard disk in the first place.

Then there is the question of program settings. Most people will set their windows so differently and because you can't save the settings to the CD, it would be pointless running it from there. The reason for mentioning this is because most people will expect it to run from CD without understanding the problems involved.

Easy peasy

Installation of all the applications was dead easy. No problems whatsoever, even though I installed all the programs onto a Zip cartridge as my hard drive, all one gigabyte of it, was rather full

at the time. Installing the entire lot was just as simple, thanks to the comprehensive instructions supplied in the Wordworth help file and the InstallTools utility supplied.

The fonts you may see on the CD and be installed for use with Wordworth or better still, can be copied into your hard drive and used from there. Luckily, the bonus fonts drawer is under 6MB so it's convenient to keep them on the hard drive where they'll always be available to Wordworth. The same couldn't be said if the fonts were left on CD only because you have to know what CD you might want to have in the CD drive when you run Wordworth.



▲ You can create your own documents for editing and the program will save them. Wordworth 6 will 'gently' allow you to copy/paste them. It's a simple and easy way to edit and save documents.



▲ There is also your long list of relative in Wordworth or Wordworth 6. The program has a drawing tool of a variety of shapes in the CD and it can be used with the National Bank.

As well as the 6D outline fonts, there is also a compilation of all the fill-strip clip art now released by Digits as well as around 10% of the scalable clip art currently available in various volumes.

On-line manuals

There are no printed manuals accompanying the CD, so where are they? On the CD of course! These are ASCII text files but it is not advised to read them on screen. You'll need to import them into Wordworth and print them out or even better, ring up Digits and ask for a manual. I believe they are charging around £5 for it.

All the programs also have on-line help to answer most questions about using the applications. The design/size based file pops up on the screen of the program you are using, leaving you the bother of having to swing between help and the program.

How new is it?

The only new upgrade for new anything from what I could tell, is the Office CD is Wordworth 6 which has had a number of new features added. None of these could really be classed as being major but then Wordworth is a pretty complete word processor already and adding headline grabbing functions would perhaps just create extra bulk which may have slowed the program down.

The most important of the new features is the four new drawing tools: two polygon tools and two others for doing bezier curves and freehand drawings. The new tools are a mixed bag though. As Digits have just released DrawStudio (a drawing program), maybe I expect a lot more of Wordworth's drawing tools, but they don't work quite the way I anticipated.

The freehand tool for example, lets you draw freehand but points in the line cannot be edited afterwards although you can change the line colour and thickness. Using the bezier curve is a bit hard to describe but imagine selecting a tool, dragging out a triangle and then watching the program create a curved line in between the points and you're some way to knowing what it's like. (Unlike a drawing program, the bezier curve points don't have control points, but line lengths and shape can be adjusted, sort of.)

To create shapes, you have polygon and regular polygon tools. The polygon tool works by using your drag out a line and then placing a point on the page

by pressing the control key. Unconventional yes, but it works well enough once you get used to it. You cannot however, unlike in Final Writer, edit the points on the polygon. The regular polygon tool is simple enough in that once you have drawn the box, the number of sides can be edited from the object's information requester.

Another very worthwhile creative addition to Wordworth is watermarks. These are simply objects that can be placed behind normal text blocks. In the example I used to review Wordworth 6, I wanted a tornpaper drop cap from DrawStudio to start a line of text. With Wordworth 6, this wasn't a problem although to be honest, I could have done it in Wordworth 5 using Text Flares. Watermarks just makes it easier.

Support for RTF (Rich Text Format), a common cross-platform RTF file format, has been boosted with files for font mapping. These are ASCII text files that let you stipulate which fonts are used by Wordworth to replace those used to create the RTF document file in another application. As well as font mapping, RTF has been re-written so it's more compatible with lots of different RTF files as well as supporting a few new font mapping functions.

The other new features, file encryption and new Affix commands, add to an otherwise already fine word processor but don't significantly boost the program to a new level. This begs

the question, will publishers like Softwood and Digits continue to put a lot of development time into programs like Wordworth and Final Writer, or simply adjust things to slightly enhance the program rather than radically improve them? Only time will tell as the answers.

Final thoughts

Overall, the Office CD and the floppy disk pack for that matter, are good value when you consider what you get. The question on value for money will depend on whether you have any or all of the auxiliary programs aside from Wordworth 6, which is the only new upgrade on the disc. The pack almost has the feel of a clearing down sale, where existing stock is cleared out at sale prices. We may see a Wordworth 7 but I don't expect any of the other applications to be upgraded. This may change, because I hear Digits are doing very well with this package so far and they may reinvest some of it in future upgrades. I hope they do. ■

Larry Holwell



▲ Keeping track of important events is simple thanks to Digits's Register, a program that is both practical and fun to use.



▲ Register 6 is where you describe what is easy to use and quite handy for personal and small business use.

Want to know more?

Wordworth 6 and Datasheet 2 were reviewed in the March 1996 issue of CU. Arrive at this would be a good place to start for further details.

Organizer 2 is a PIM which isn't some fancy dinky bit of Personal Information Manager. Looking like a file-fax, this is not necessary you won't be referred to be seen with. The program helps you keep track of names and addresses, important events and even has a host of supplements which will provide lots of interesting reading on everything from angling to mice. A very much under-rated program that is intuitive and dare I say useful. More than that, it's fun to use.

The fourth application is Money Matters, a home accounts program that has been around since the year dot. I started out with the first version, which at the time was called Home Accounts. This latest incarnation, has a similar look and feel to the other Digits applications, and can handle multiple accounts that work like most bank accounts on a credit and debit basis. Money Matters also has tools like a loan calculator, insurance inventory, currency calculator and even graphs for the visually challenged. A useful tool for watching those pennies.

WORDWORTH 6 OFFICE

System requirements
CD and hard drive plus 1 MB of free memory.

Size of file 32%

Installing the program to a floppy disk will take 10 minutes.

Performance 90%

Wordworth 6 Office and Datasheet 2 are both reviewed in Register 2.

Value for money 94%

Wordworth 6 Office is a great value for the money offered for 10 years.

Verdict 92%

Three-in-one pack at a top price. Superb.

92%

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AVM and Sportster Vi

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As well as surfing the web and sending faxes, now modems can be answering machines too. All you need are the right tools for the job.

Fax modems have been around a long time and, thankfully, so has commercial software such as GPFax to enable you to use them to send faxes. Voice modems, however, are a newer invention. They combine the data capabilities of a fax modem with a digital answering machine. Again, like faxes, you need dedicated software to make the voice capabilities work. Currently there is only one package on the Amiga that we know of that can do this: the shareware *AVM* (Advanced Voice Modem) Suite 2.0. *AVM* doubles as fax software by using the EChex. We checked it out, in its embryonic stages, armed with the popular voice modems, the USR Sportster Vi 23000.

Trial run

AVM is shareware so you can check it out first before deciding to buy it. And in true shareware-to-help-the-reader style, CU Amiga Magazine has the unique trial version on this month's cover CD. You can find it in the CUAmi Magazine directory all ready to install. The installer is

most of the way but there are currently several things which have been left out which would have been very helpful such as showing examples which need to be made and the option of skipping the invention of them to ease startup.

Getting it on

To get started is simple enough. The installer asks whether you have a Voice capable modem and depending on the answer, expands to the modems supported. The modems *AVM* supports for Voice are: ZyXEL, LineLink, MTD Dolphin, Rockwell-based Voice modems and the USR Sportster Vi.

The Rockwell option actually includes a great deal of modems since they are the world's most prolific manufacturers of the chip-sets used in modems, unfortunately it's not easy to tell before buying a modem without any particular frame or brand on it.

Good for a fax

If you don't own a voice modem, *AVM* is still good for faxing with the following modems, gener-



▲ With *AVM* as your proxy, that letter can get out to someone in no time at all.

Class 1 & 2 fax modems, *AVM* DataFax Class 1 & 2 modems, the Super 144 L/C and USR modems (Class 1). If your modem has fax capability it will probably work with *AVM*. *AVM* does what the others do in that it simulates a printer. Normally you would use a word processor and the output is streamed to a file which can be faxed right away or scheduled to be delivered at a certain time. The latter function requires that the package is registered.

I printed my standard fax document from Final Writer to GPFax and *AVM*. After testing both to our office fax machine, the output quality was identical although *AVM*'s fax was slightly narrower in dimension.

Using a computer to generate a fax produces far better results on the other end than a traditional scanning fax machine. Even the CU Amiga Magazine graphic banner at the top of my fax document was nicely delivered as Final Writer prints to *AVM*.

Unfortunately it's not all rosy when it comes to using voice mail. In fact it's very complicated and the documentation is

abysmal. Before going to press, I'd had numerous conversations with the Canadian author, Alberto Villanico, to resolve many of the problems that I encountered. The biggest one was that support for the Sportster Vi was only just implemented, which is a significant oversight as other voice modems are rare in the UK.

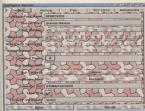
No sounds

There is no audio compression CODEC for the Sportster Vi which means that the voicemail prompts and incoming messages can't be played by the Amiga. OK, normally you can listen to them through the speaker on the modem. Nope, you can't do that either unless you want a distortion or to unplug the modem. The Sportster Vi also lets the share down as the external speaker output jack hardly seemed to work even on maximum volume. So it's either use headphones or plug in some kind of amplified speaker. This is very annoying and needs to be sorted out.

The voicemail prompts which actually need recording are



▲ Both of the voice prompts used for the recorded scripts need to be recorded on this page.



■ The Amiga 1300 software interface shows a colorful pattern of red and white shapes.

only mentioned in the small "Installation" text file. All the others are for much more complex voicemail systems which really need the stupider complex "programmer". This isn't even present in the archive for some reason and it's just as well as it's just about impossible to use and totally undocumented.



■ Here's the Amiga 1300 software interface which displays incoming and outgoing messages and files. Configuration pages are accessed via menu.

for a start. Reasonable defaults must be included and the documentation needs to be vastly improved.

However, right here and now it's all that exists and since it's otherwise you'd be a fool not to have a bash at it. It should shape up in the future and we'll go for a full review then.

I'd recommend the Sportster II when it is fully filled up and the problems mentioned here are ironed out despite the silly speaker output. However, as it stands it's a reasonable voice modem and with a free "Q" 168k upgrade from USF, there's nothing to touch it at the price. ■

Mal Bellhouse

More work

Overall, *Amiga* needs a lot more work. We must have a comprehensive CODEC for the Sportster II.



■ The Amiga 1300 Programmer is a basic package for very difficult users.

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Audio Hardware Interface

■ Release: TBA ■ Developer: Martin Bloom ■ Supplier: various

Peering into the future of Amiga sound we see AHI making an impact.

The chances are that we will never again see the level of standardisation that there was in the Amiga market of a few years ago. With development on the Amiga effectively having ceased since the launch of the A4 chipset, people are following their partly upgrade paths to bring their

Amigas more in line with state-of-the-art technology in their own fields of interest, buying graphics cards if graphics is important to them, and sound cards if they are into music. On top of this the various companies, considering bringing out Amiga-like computers, don't even agree on what CPU to base it on. The Amiga market of a

few years time will include a lot of non-standard pieces of equipment and a lot of exotic variants.

How will we avoid the kind of problem that plagues PC users, such as having to reconfigure all their new software for their hardware setup, and quite often having to reconfigure the hardware setup for the software? The PC is often unfairly vilified by Amiga users, but one very definite weakness of the PC - at least until plug and play becomes the exception rather than the rule - is its handling of sound output, as anyone who has spent ages attempting to coerce a new game to work with their sound card will attest.

With the AHI reconfigurable audio system, a game (or any other piece of software with sound output) can send the sound data to a device handler which already knows what hardware you have and interprets the sound data in a way which your hardware can

understand. If you have the latest DSP based sound card from Bell, it will play through that and play the card any hardware specific commands it receives. If you are reliant on a bog standard Paula chip (part of the custom chipset) for audio playback, no problem. It won't sound as good, but it will do its best.



▲ AHI ready to connect and adapt software and its own

What is AHI?

AHI stands for Audio Hardware Interface. It is a hardware independent audio system. AHI provides reconfigurable hardware support from a single device driver which can be easily configured for standard sound cards and made to utilize onboard DSP functions in "smart" cards. Its fast mixing routines will mix 8- or 16-bit samples of any length and with any number of loops from fast RAM and output 16-bit mono or stereo data in up to 128 channels. It supports non real-time mixing for computers with slower processors by speaking to disk.

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AIR has been described as sharing for studies only. CyberGeophy has done for groups. The AIR system is a simple addition to your Datas: drawer consisting of the AIR.DRIVER and device drivers for whatever hardware you want to install. When a manufacturer produces a new standard card, all they have to do is write an AIR driver for their card and the old problems of finding software to run on it is solved. If you have the AIR driver, your new standard card will work with every

MS-DOS compliant software package you use, even if they were written before the sound card existed. There would be no need to go through all your old software reconfiguring it with. If it is configured to output through the MS-DOS system, then it is already configured with your new sound card. The flip side of this is of course also true - a software author writing a new package need know nothing about the various sound cards on the market to write in compatibility for them, because

Instead of writing output drivers for all the sound cards they can find out about, they need only write an output driver for A&B and their program will work with every A&B compliant sound card that has ever or will ever be made.

Amiga is currently in Beta, although it works and is available for developers and users alike, it has a little way to go before it is the finished product. The Amiga score alone really needs something like this, and the reception to Amiga has been enthusiastic. Martin Jones is continuing development on the Am! system, but is dependent on other programmers to support Am! in their software. The lot of users and software with Am! support is continuously growing as more and more developers jump onto the bandwagon. After all it makes life a lot easier for them too. ■

Andrew Kinn

To find and create accounts:
 (1) <http://www.pastorbase.org/>
 (2) <http://www.iaa.nl/> — Pastors' Alliance
 Support Unit
 or Martin Bloor: bloor@pastorbase.org
 Finally, the Airmail address is:
fig@ig.darmstadt-evangelisch.net

AH support

The vast majority of audio output devices already have, or are shortly to get (AES suggests), software support; it's not quite as imperative as for, but growing all the time. AES is even beginning to make its mark outside its natural audience of music makers with the first couple of AES-compatible games.

Keywords: organizational commitment; turnover intentions; job satisfaction

Bottom: 20"
 Front:
 Throat:
 Hips:
 Feet: Built by hand; good ship

[illegible][illegible]

Keywords: *Neurospora crassa*; *Agaricus bisporus*; *Aspergillus niger*; *Aspergillus fumigatus*; *Aspergillus oryzae*

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NAME: _____
DATE: _____
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Author:
Cynthia
Morgan - School of a Forgotten World
Year:
1999, 2001

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TurboCalc v4

■ Price: £49.95 ■ Developer: Schatztroche ■ Supplier: Digits ☎ 01395 270273



The latest shot fired in the Digits versus Softwood war lands on our shores in the shape of this German spreadsheet. Is it bye-bye FinalCalc?

The latest salvo in the spreadsheet war is TurboCalc v4, a significant upgrade from v3.5, which was given away by Easom as part of the Amiga Magic pack. Although TurboCalc doesn't conform to the Digits standard layout, it seems to conform to Amiga's pitiless policy of attempting to imitate Softwood, and comparisons with FinalCalc are inevitable. Which is somewhat fortunate for TurboCalc, because comparisons with the top spreadsheet software on Mac or PC would be less favourable.

A contender

The latest incarnation of TurboCalc comes on CD-ROM. The program can be run straight from the disk or installed to your hard drive, or even possibly thanks to the English, French, German and Italian language installers. An AmigaGuide conversion patch will install the help files in an ODD-compatible form. If necessary, a clever idea which will make life a lot easier for owners of older machines.

The most obvious difference between this and FinalCalc is that the latter has much more confusing menus. TurboCalc seems less intimidating, with fewer nested sub-menus, but this is not because it lacks facilities. On the contrary TurboCalc did almost everything I wanted it to, which is a welcome surprise by Amiga spreadsheet



▲ As you use TurboCalc v4 to store your financial spreadsheeting, this demonstration shows how it can and indeed the best of greater things to come.

standards. TurboCalc complements its easy-to-use menus with a user-definable toolbar.

TurboCalc has followed FinalCalc's lead in allowing multiple sheets in a project, with connections between cells in different sheets, a facility which has been totally lacking in Amiga spreadsheets until recently. Another feature TurboCalc followed the FinalCalc lead with is animated graphs - see the box for details.

Ups and downs

TurboCalc can zoom in and out of the page in the manner of DTP

packages, a feature of enormous use if you want to handle outside sheets, which saves a lot of hammering at the cursor keys and multiple screen redraws. Automation is also significantly improved with the addition of files, a clever system to allow the user to point to lists of increasing value. If, for instance, you wished to define a sheet with several hundred columns sorted by date in a four day period, you need only set the first date, select the cells you want dates in, inform the fill sequencer that you want increments of four days, and the cells will be appropriately filled. TurboCalc's files were never so flexible or easy to use.

Spreadsheets are traditionally for financial calculations but this is far from their only use. They can be used all sorts of data processing tasks. I know of spreadsheets being used for running Fantasy Football games, designing hi-fi loudspeakers, even designing pyramids. So the ability to import data is critical, and in this TurboCalc both fails and succeeds. On the plus side, TurboCalc can import from Excel, Lotus 1-2-3, and Procalc, the three most likely foreign spread-

sheet formats users will want to deal with, and is far better than FinalCalc in this regard. On the down side, its text import functions are not so good. TurboCalc imports four variants on CSV (Comma Separated Values), which take in many of the standard ASCII outputs from databases etc., but isn't all that flexible. I occasionally need to import huge lists of raw data produced by a piece of PC based test equipment, which none of the CSV loaders in TurboCalc will handle perfectly. FinalCalc has a truly excellent user - definable text importer which can load in pretty much anything.

With v4, TurboCalc is now able to compete on equal footing with FinalCalc. Some will prefer by one, some will prefer by the other. I find TurboCalc a real breeze to use compared to FinalCalc. Each have their own strengths, and in the final analysis, each package will suit different people. ■

Andrew Ellis

TURBOCALC V4

1000	system requirements: Amiga 25 or 286
900	size of file: 1.5MB
800	data entered only but it's easy to use
700	graphics: 100%
600	features: 100%
500	value for money: 100%
400	to print screen, and full range of operations and there are spread sheet features
300	overall
200	best ever
100	functionality combined with real power
0	90

Animated graphs

TurboCalc and FinalCalc are pretty similar in terms of features - often surprisingly so. FinalCalc introduced the idea of animated graphs, which are a great way of showing how data changes over time. Rather strangely, the graphs were output in a series of EPSs instead of an animation, which would have been easy to implement and saved users a lot of time. TurboCalc has introduced animated graphs itself, but bizarrely has the same omission.



PD Scene



Two Worms clones, one Doom clone and an Orb slideshow. That'll do nicely, for a start, for Andrew Korn's journey into the 'scene'.

Sliders 2 Puzzle game

This is a nice professionally produced version of a type of game I've always found tedious but some people like. In Sliders 2 you have a jumbled grid of squares with one space in it so that by sliding the squares about you can unjumble the grid. The presentation is high quality, with lots of options including one to load your own graphics in to be jumbled up. If you are after a sliders type game, you should look at this.



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Price: disk 75p
plus 75p P+R.

83%

Orb Albums Slideshow

If you're an Orb fan and you like a bit of postmodern art, this two-disk slideshow should be just your cup of herbal tea. What you get for your money is a string of pretty high quality scans of just about every album and single cover the Orb have ever released and a rather decent mix of one of their tracks which plays in the background. A relaxing experience.



Available from:
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Formby, Liverpool L3 3PX. Tel: 01704 834338. Price: £1.50 (two disks) plus
75p P+R.

85%

Shoemaker-Levy 9 Slideshow

If your idea of fun is watching massive chunks of rock and ice hurtling at incredible speeds through space and then falling screaming into the atmosphere of a distant gas giant, leaving holes in its very atmosphere and staining the cloud-cover with dark, brooding wounds, then you'll probably enjoy this disk. When Shoemaker-Levy crashed into Jupiter in July of '94, the Hubble space telescope was busy taking snaps and here are some of the results in all their J-Pegged, 24-bit glory.

The images are all accessed via their WorldWebb icons, which is an effective if simplistic front end. The text files have to be loaded into your own file reader which seems a bit shoebly, but then they are pretty boring, so it's no great loss.

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Beasties v2.9 Worms game

Beasties is a simple kind of game in which you wander around various landscapes shooting at your opponents with rifles and bazookas, dropping dynamite on each other's heads and building bridges over chasms. Sounds familiar? It is. You can even load custom Worms levels into it. PD versions of commercial games have been a regular of these pages for years. Someone thinks of a feature they wish the original game had, so they write their own version with that feature in. This one is like Worms only with a lot less features. Most Amiga gamers have probably got Worms by now and those who haven't can pick it up for a bargain price if they hunt about. It really isn't worth the small saving of buying the shareware version of this game instead of the vastly superior original.



Available from: Arrow PD, PO Box 7
Dover, Kent CT1 4AP. Tel: 01323 832344. Price: Full version £3.99,
demo version 75p plus 75p P+R.

64%

Vulcan Doom clone demo

My doom clone engine is faster than yours' competitiveness is dying off, but this game offers an interesting late entry. It's initially frustrating. Stick it in a reasonably sophisticated machine and you can enjoy an atmospheric background suffering past at light-speed. After a few moments you realise that it is actually a rather clever badge. The background is identical wherever you look and you can only move forwards in straight lines - it isn't possible to jump into a wall, for example. The usual guns and monsters formula is there and there are a few horrorsides pasted on the screen to make it a bit more maze-like. However, there isn't a whole lot in it beyond those initial impressions. A decent PD blast, but more Zombie Apocalypse than A&E.



Available from:
Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Russell Lane, Farnley, Liverpool L3 3PX.
Tel: 01704 634325. Price: disk 79p plus 79p P+P

83%

Ingenuous Adventure

From the moment this game starts you know you are in the presence of something truly dire. Your character, a fat red-crested bull-Wendle, half-stay hybrid life form, wallfles across the screen like a penguin with a club foot. You are, allegedly, a prisoner in a high security prison from which you must escape. But it's all so simple. The guards just warn you off gently when you hit them and doors are never locked. The prisoner in the cell next door has a security pass and a blob down the corridor has a gun he doesn't mind giving you because you were talked to a mate of his.

It took me only 10 minutes to complete. At least the puzzle makes sense, a rarity even in commercial games. Not without comedy value but puzzle solvers should give it a wide berth.



Available from:
Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Russell Lane, Farnley, Liverpool L3 3PX.
Tel: 01704 634325. Price: disk 79p plus 79p P+P



50%

Microlyte Warrior Flightsim plus

There hasn't been a decent flight sim on the Amiga for ages but it looks like the wait may have been worth it. If you like the notion of whizzing about in a 3D plane shooting your foes out of the sky, pick up this version.

Before it becomes a commercial release! Not only do you get a flight sim which displays light-scattered objects, animated backgrounds and projected horizons fast enough to be flawlessly smooth on a decent G30, but you can play multiplayer through a serial connection at split screen.

Stephen Birch, the author, provides the final game: will have a strong tactical element, the opponents battling each other not only for supremacy of the sky but also of the ground, where mines, roads and oil rigs can be built to allow the upgrading of your aircraft.

If the first game is half as good as it sounds, it'll be a kinder. Even in its present state, you can still attempt that overly frenetic turn which takes you through the rotating blades of the windmill and onto your opponent's tail while you watch in satisfaction as he sees what you are doing on your half of the split screen!



Available from:
Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Russell Lane, Farnley, Liverpool L3 3PX.
Tel: 01704 634325. Price: disk 79p plus 79p P+P

91%

Total Domination Game

Total Domination is just a little reminiscent of an old game called K285. The idea is to challenge your rivals for domination of an asteroid belt. You can build various structures on your asteroid, and eventually build your own ship and missiles to seek out new asteroids to colonise and new civilizations to destroy. The presentation is reasonable for a PD game but nothing spectacular. The gameplay is slow and a little lacking in variation, but will create bored old game fans for a while. Unfortunately the full version is licenseware and the G3 charge places it in competition with some pretty decent old commercial titles like Powermancer or Genesis which you can often pick up for a similar price on budget labels these days.



Available from:
Online PD, 1 The Cloisters, Russell Lane, Farnley, Liverpool L3 3PX. Tel: 01704 634325. Price: disk 79p plus 79p P+P

73%

Brand
new
Month

PD Utilities



Nostradamus predictions: fact or fiction? Whatever your opinion on that matter, he never predicted that he'd end up on the public domain pages of CU Amiga Magazine. Andrew Korn is your host to this month's selection of value utilities.

Blue Rose Graphics Collection

Fonts and clip art

It can be a real problem sometimes trying to find decent colour fonts and clip art. There is quite a lot of it around but it is often pretty poor quality. So this collection from Eddie Barry is very welcome indeed.

Blue Rose Graphics is a three-disk set and has a great selection of colour fonts plus cut and paste fonts designed with video work in mind. The clip art is varied and of a generally high quality although limited in range, as you might expect in a collection of this size. There is a selection of backgrounds which are all in 64 colour even-toned and all miraculously look like they might actually have some use. You probably don't want to hear about the Christmas theme in the disks at this time of year, so be warned not to get this collection if you are still filled with the spirit of hibernation. No harm in planning ahead though.

The first disk of the collection is a self-running slideshow guide to what is on the rest of the disk, which is a nice touch particularly when it comes to picking the right font. A collection on CD would give you far bigger range, but you'd be unlikely to find one with such high standards as this.

Christmas 96.
TRISH FORT FROSTY
CHRISTMAS BRIDGOLD
EAGLE
IVORY FORT 6666 6666
DEPTHEUM
BLAN FORT BRICK

Available from:
Eddie Barry, 14
Suter Road,
Donaghadee,
County Wick,
Co. Anagh BT66
21L Price: £5
including P+P

86%

Filequest

Directory utility



Daguerre Emmanuel's challenge to Opus' supremacy of the directory utility market looks a very strong one. Some people think that the Opus programs took a wrong turn with v3 and Daguerre is one of them. His program is based around the old twin Directory list layout of Opus 4 and 540.

Although very similar to Opus 4, there are some differences and on the whole they are positive. Filequest is faster in handling directories and performing operations like moving or copying files than Opus. It is also more proficient at handling filogaps. Use of the Wild Library gives it an efficient and flexible front end and the whole thing is highly configurable.

The shareware registration fee of 100 Francs gets you a slightly updated version and a license to double the shareware nagger which comes up fairly regularly. It also gets you Future updates and keeps M. Emmanuel interested in developing a piece of software which is a few small updates short of brilliant.

Available from: Online PD, 1 The
Colston, Nelson Lane, Forendy,
Liverpool L3 3PL, Tel: 01504 824223
Price: disk 75p plus 75p P+P

88%

Vark 14

Utilities selection

Vark is back with another disk packed with archived utilities. There is a Trouble tool to this one with a Kluge's account installer for the built-in speech handler which comes with a complete text of Hamlet in Kluge's text it out and a Markbush's book which shows stars checking part at a speed controlled by a 'warp-speed' fonttype. The author of this masterpiece informs us that warp 5 is 1010 times the speed of light, but that warp 10 is impossible! There is a pretty decent MSN based HTML page creator, a GUI for AmiTCP's library which decodes expansion board I/O, a rather good diagnostics program, assorted AMN graphics utilities and a selection of other goodies. Vark's disk resembles a lucky dip, but they are always worth dipping in to.



Available from:
Roberts Smith PD,
180 Falsdon Way,
Manchester,
Garden Suburb,
London NW11 6JE.
Tel: 0181-4551626
Price: 80p plus
80p P+P

87%

The third dimension #26

Disk magazine

The third dimension is a disk magazine of about 3D and virtual reality applications. Although it appears to have several images in the past, the main theme appears to be in the more realistic realm of virtual reality. Tutorials and discussions for the new rather aging 3D Construction Kit, (on Amiga, PC and ST) make up the main body. The magazine seems to have quite a following: an indicative amount of it seems to be given over to contributors credits and the letters page is pretty busy. The fact that it has reached issue 26 is some indication of its popularity.

If you think that a magazine about 3D Construction Kit is living in the past, you should see the design, which belongs to the blue and orange era of Workbench 1.3. Even so, it has a straightforward enough front end, and the look suits the informal tone and community atmosphere.

The main tutorial topic in this issue is about constructing a flight sim, and comes with a directory full of coder's resources to help out.

There is also a project to create a multi-author theme-park environment, the idea being that anyone can code their own ride and add it on. If you are into 3DCK you'll probably love this magazine.

Available from:
Roberts Smith PD,
180 Falsdon Way,
Manchester Garden
Suburb, London
NW11 6JE.
Tel: 0181-455 1626
Price: 80p plus
80p P+P



81%

GamesBlaster

Hints and cheats database

Disk full of game cheats and hints have been knocking about for a while but few have the kind of depth of coverage that this one has. Stuart Beatty has released this disk as an infocore.



which means that if you use a copy of it you have to send him a postcard with a game cheat on it for him to include in his next update.

The cheats are all listed in a useful AmigaGuide-like format: just look for the game that is troubling you in the alphabetical index and you are bound to find a tip to get you on your way. If you check out Alan Bond 300: you are in for a severe treat - there's a saved games editor which will get you through to the real life no up ever could.

The thing that impressed me most about this disk is the wonderful bonus file. You'll only find it if you look for it, because it has no icon. It's called 'Steamed Trout' and is indeed a recipe for steamed trout. More hidden recipes on PD disks, please.

Available from: Online PD, 1 The
Chancers, Mafud Lane, Fennyng,
Liverpool L3 3FX. Tel: 01704 834326
Price: disk 75p plus 75p P+P

83%

Nostrodamus

Disk encyclopaedia

From the moment this disk boots up you know you are witnessing something awful. An abnormal title page pops up with what I assume is meant to be Nostrodamus but is clearly a Portuguese loanword in an Maf nylon shirt. This glorifies this sequence is accompanied by a piece of flamenco music, which would hardly be appropriate even if it was any good. Then we get to the meat, a huge 18k of AmigaGuide files covering 101 of Nostrodamus' predictions. Only of course they aren't actually his predictions, they are 'translations' of his predictions.



Translations of Nostrodamus are usually pretty dodgy, making pretty liberal interpretations of the original French. Nostrodamus wrote in a deliberately obtuse language - presumably because he was, in fact, not writing predictions but political satire, which was a dangerous occupation at the time. This makes it very easy to interpret any way you like, but I would really love to know the original French which this compiler translates in '... a cluster orbital nucleus five wraps for light atmosphere ignition', and it's hard to give much credence to the prediction that the allies will reconquer Spain from the Chinese in March of 1995. As a bonus there is a pointless number slider game.

The only value in this disk is the amusement of using anything this bad. Cut out the middleman and buy a blank disk instead.

Available from: Classic Amiga
Software, 51 Deansgate, Rusholme,
Manchester M26 9FJ. Tel: 0161 722
1026. Price: £1 plus 70 P+P

09%

CD-ROM Scene



You can get anything on CD these days, honest. Andrew Korn has the proof here.

Card Games

Until reviewing this disk I had never played Klondike before. After trying it out I feel no temptation to change my habits. Klondike is, for all its popularity, a pretty basic patience game and in this it is inferior to any number of much smaller, more Wordbench-friendly options. The reason behind its popularity is the presentation – lots of colour and music and most importantly interchangeable cardsets.

When I'm playing a card game, the most important thing about the cards to me is that the cards should be immediately identifiable, which Klondike card sets often aren't. The emphasis is on the illustration, which seems to be an unnecessary dilution of the core purpose of a card game. I don't like to look

for the little number and symbol tucked in the corner of the card, and if I want to see a picture of a Hawaiian beach, I'll get a postcard. But the popularity of alternative cardsets is amply testified to by the huge Rubik's Domain collection collected here. There are around 250 of them, almost all cartoons, science fiction TV shows or politically incorrect pictures of women.

Despite this, all the ones I looked at were pretty well made, the Bonanza deck based on Dave McCook's cover art particularly impressed me. The deal you can get into 88 by 108 pixel images is surprising.

There is an archived collection of other games on the disk which despite the name of the



CD are mostly not card games. There are lots of Chess programs including the excellent UChess, about a million mannered-type games, and a fair assortment of Ohrales, GCs, Mahjong etc. I even found a bridge programme which works, and a half decent Monopoly game. A little user friendliness would have been great – a text file telling you how to unarchive from CUJ is a little poor, but you should find enough here to keep yourself amused on a rainy day.

Available from:
PD Soft,
217-219
Hawthorn Road,
Southend-on-Sea,
Essex S55 4LB.
Tel: 01702 30044/0300000.
Price: £14.99 plus 75p P+H.

80%

Amiga Repair Kit



Every now and then, disks go for a walk down forgotten streets. One day you stick that essential disk in your drive and your computer sneezes, grinds and spits it back out.

In disgust, if you remembered to back up, you'll be OK, otherwise it's a job for Amiga Repair Kit.

The main attraction of ARK is Disksave, which is an extremely powerful disk repair utility written by David Pearce, an original Commodore systems engineer who worked on the old C128. Disksave has been around in one

form or another for almost as long as there have been Amiges. Versions prior to v3 were shareware but its latest incarnation is a lot more powerful than those. There are now many more options for file recovery and things like undoing and undoing things in the old shareware versions, mucking in on the tra-

ditional sections of programmes like Quarterback tools.

Also on the disc are RDB, Safe1.1 and GDBackup which are Rigid Disk Block backup utilities; Upper Disk Tools, which has a very unusual file recovery program that treats damaged volumes as files in a virtual 'teacony'; device and a small and not particularly interesting selection of heavily distributable.

The odd thing about this disc is that it looks like shareware despite the fact that the disc has only 288Kb on it. Disksave4 is accompanied by Disksave3 and 2 and although there is about 28Kb of Disksave3 on the CD your final HD install is just 400K. RDB-Safe1 is 1.1MB, 85% of which is documentation which is a pretty large chunk of that 288Kb even if it hadn't been put on the CD twice, and the freshly

distributable directory is small and uninspired.

This is not a cheap disc, and you don't get a lot of Mb for your money. Having said that, in Upper Disk Tools and Disksave you have two very powerful pieces of software. If this was a bit cheaper or had a decent range of supplementary PD, I would recommend it. In this present package I would look for the software elsewhere.

Available from: Ward
Science, 1 Rowlandson
Close, Leicester,
Leicestershire LE4 2SE.
Tel: 0153 338 0882.
Price £28.95 plus £1 P+H

71%

Euro CD

Unsurprisingly, given the name, this CD is aimed squarely at the Amiga Euro scene. Which means all the software is so tacky it will crash your system, and the documentation is all in German or Italian.

Well OK then, not all of it. You will come across the odd program without English documentation, but English is pretty much the lingua franca, and if you can't access the odd Quadenian whose English is less than perfect then you don't deserve this disc anyway.

The disc behind this disc is to present the work of Amiga artists, musicians and programmers from around Europe. There are a hundred odd titles of pictures, including some really impressive work, dozens of games, masses of modules and a few hours' worth of demo and animation viewing. There is an assortment of utilities, some shareware, some commercial demos, including a couple of webpage makers, an MP3 converter, a demo version of DreamWorld and hundreds of smaller tools (but if you want



utilities you are better off looking elsewhere).

If it is graphics, demos and music you are after, you will be better served. The demos run from disc, which is nice, although be warned the combination of system crashes and boring demos which clog things like to your system resources and refuse to go away will mean plenty of reboots as you work your way through the demos directors. Compared to any other way of trying out this many demos however, it is relatively



painless. The pictures and music all similarly play direct from disc, the appropriate viewers/players set up on the CD to allow everything to be viewed direct from their Workbench icons. If all that Euro-speak 'my workbench is bigger than yours' stuff irritates you, you'll help disc. If you're willing to put up with it to see lots of great art and demos, you'll love it.

Available from: Mind Science, 1 Rowlandson Close, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 2SE. Tel: 0116 234 0663. Price £11.99 plus £1 P+R

88%

System Booster

This disc occupies somewhere in the region of 2,080 assorted programs for improving your system. There are no games, no demos, no graphics files, no mods, just pure, 100% utilities. There is everything from improved monitor driver (Gambit will save) through module loader (before commodities is crashing software).

As good as the bog standard Workbench has become with MUI, there is work to be done, and the beauty of the Amiga is there is always someone willing to do it and make it available as PD, saving you the wait for the next OS/2 update from whoever they eventually buy out the Amiga. System Booster is a huge compilation of these programs.

Some of the programs are cosmetic such as: improvements like NewIcons, an ingenious replacement icon system which works happily alongside icons with entirely different palettes. It's time to ditch the old four-colour standard and this is a very good way forwards.

There is also plenty to



improve the working of your computer. There is a directory packed with replacements: AmigaDOS commands, a large collection of fonts, drivers to cover everything from Viscon graphics cards to Epson Hatted scanners, and more schedulers, disk backup utilities, Affix

scripts, button patches and text editors that is entirely decent.

There is a fair amount of software which isn't the latest release - MUI is there in version 3.3, Virus2 in M3.2 and so on, but that isn't really the point of the CD. If you want up-to-date, get the latest AmigaNet collection or

download the software yourself. This disc is about giving you everything. Pretty much any little tweak or utility you are after can be found here complete with AmigaGuide documentation.

How useful this collection is to you depends a little on how technical you are. Anyone who is prepared to read the instructions will find enough on this disc to give their system a real boost, but the more technical you are the more you will get out of it. If you are proficient with a soldering iron, there are even instructions for putting a 1200 in a tower case, making a PC keyboard connector and more.

Available from: Mind Science, 1 Rowlandson Close, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 2SE. Tel: 0116 234 0663. Price £25.95 plus £1 P+R

92%

Women of the Web

Women of the Web, the appropriately named Sedness Software's Internet site, is an "Interactive Multimedia Encyclopedia of Female Celebrities". They go on to inform us that this is NOT an adult title, and that not one nude picture can be found on this CD. Once you open the jewel case though you find a cheeky upgrade card which you can send off with a letter to 'upgrade' to the unsuit 18 certificate version.

What the 'ol the Web' bit in the title means is that the data is presented in HTML, and you will find a copy of WWW on the disc so that you can run WWW with out installation. Well in theory, anyway. In practice this means various interface flicks, as the on-disk WWW fails to a Pile interface display, and the only way of changing the display mode is to install WWW to your hard drive. Fortunately Sedness have put an installer on the disc. However, WWW doesn't handle JPEGs, which the disc has plenty of. Using IExplore makes the presentation much better.

Once you get your browser

started out and find your way into the index, you are faced with a simple but effective title page with an A-Z of index links. Selecting a link takes you to a list of women whose names start with that letter, each one accompanied with a little mug-shot. Select the name or mug-shot and you get to a variable number of pages covering the woman in question, these pages consisting of a few small, often rather low quality JPEGs and very occasionally a brief biography where you can learn useful things like favourite colours and pop stars.

It is a bit hard to see exactly what the point of all this is. There's not enough here to appeal to the baser instincts, you can't stick it on your bedroom wall, and despite the multimedia encyclopedia tag, there is little by way of encyclopedic information beyond the photos and the odd short movie clip or sample. The disc is like a compilation of hundreds of those obsessive fan



Back To Main Menu Back To Index F

Websites that every major media star seems to have - but obviously by definition are interesting to only a few people, not this many. I guess this disc must be for obsessive obsessives; the suggestion around the office is that this is a kind of mail-order catalogue for stalkers. If you really want this sort of thing, buy a copy of Loaded - the pictures are higher resolution. Alternatively,

go out and get some fresh air.

**Available from: Sedness Software, 13 Russell Terrace, Mundesley, Norfolk NR11 8LJ. Tel: 01263 723588
Price £24.95 including P+P**

46

3000 JPEG Textures



Last month I reviewed Weird Science's Multimedia Backdrops CD collection. This one has 3,000 assorted backdrops and textures, including most of all of the images on the last disc.

The texture images on this disc vary significantly. Some are full screen backdrops, while

others are rescaling tile patterns ideal for background decoration on your Workbench or on HTML pages as well as the usual use as texture maps for rendering more realistic objects.

The choice of JPEG format is one some may object to, as images will have to be converted

into GIFs for many Amiga applications. Personally I think it is very sensible. A Gifsave converter or a graphics package with a decent range of loaders such as ImageFX or PPhoto will happily turn those JPEGs into GIFs of whatever colour depth you choose, or into GIFs for faster web pages, and the advantage in file size compactness means you get a lot more data for your money.

Using the disc is pretty straightforward if you use a file manager or can get by in CLI, but try opening it on Workbench and you'll get nowhere. It's not a big point, but there's enough space on the disc for at least a little file

viewer utility. The images are all reproduced in thumbnail, which is pretty essential if you want to find what you want but don't have a year to waste looking.

There are a limited number of textures in this world. The upside is that this disc has most of them, the down side is that so do a lot of other discs. If you have any other texture discs, you'll find a lot of repetition. The Imagine PCSD CD reviewed last month had about a quarter of the textures on this disc in BMP24 format, for example. But if you are short of texture files and looking for a full disc, this is a very good collection.

**Available from: Weird Science, 1 Newlandson Close, Lainesville, Lancashire LA4 2SE. Tel: 0116 234 9882
Price £14.99 plus £1 P+P**

86



The best excuse for reading a magazine backwards, Amiga Workshop is here with more top tutorials.

78 Imagine 4.0

How can you make your 3D graphics look more realistic? John Kennedy explains with some tips on modelling and texturing.

84 Wired World

Whipping up the HTML series, Mat Bettinson puts all the previously examined techniques to work and produces a web shrine to the 50's.

87 Net God

News and gossip from the Net God this month include a rant about junk mail and good news in the form of widespread PWD support.

88 Surf of the Month

Dipping once again into that limitless resource of the world wide web we uncover a range of useful, and not so useful web sites.

96 Masterclass

Commodities are wonderful little tools that can transform your Workshop: but what are they and how do they work?

98 Q&A

Our new staff writer Andrew Rose joins forces with Mat as they wade through all your queries and do their best to answer them.

100 FAQ

We've often asked about how CU Design's CUDCs can be used with other computers, like Macs and PCs. FAQ has all the answers.

101 Sound Lab

A round-up of some of the best audio shareware uncovers a handful of useful and innovative music softwares.



Amiga 486



Amiga 486



Amiga 486

Feedback

76 Art Gallery

The standard of reader's artwork just gets better and better. This month's showcase includes more examples of the growing popularity of 3D graphics.

102 Backchat

It's a right can of worms this month as readers give out in defence of the PD scene, set the world in rights about the files and give Workshop a kick up the backside.

104 Points of View

Now that 1996 has finally slipped into the past, the CU Design Magazine team give their views on the highs and lows of the past year and look forward to what 1997 may hold.

Amiga Workshop

Art Gallery

Art imitates life or life imitates art? Whatever side of the fence you're on concerning that debate, here are some great pictures. All done on the Amiga too.



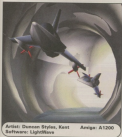
Artist: Stephen Clarke, Surrey Amiga: A1200
Software: Brilliance 3.0, DPoint IV and V, PPoint V6.3 and ImageFX



Artist: Carl Thomas, West Wales Amiga: A1200
Software: Imagine 3.0, DPoint V and ImageStudio



Artist: Duncan Styles, Kent Amiga: A1200
Software: LightWave



Imagine 4.0

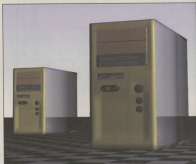
PART 2

More lumps and bumps are forged and lovingly manipulated into many realistic-looking objects with a little help from Imagine 4, of course.

Surface attributes define the appearance of an object, by giving the impression of a particular material or texture. However, let's look at how most image-rendering programs can go a stage further to add realism by means of 'textures'. A texture is usually applied to an object or surface and can achieve two things: first of all, it can alter the surface appearance of an object, and secondly it can alter the shape. For example, think of an orange: the colour is obviously orange but the surface is covered in tiny dimples. It's possible to spend months adding these tiny dimples to a sphere but a texture will greatly simplify this process. By wrapping an image of dots around the sphere and defining it to be a 'bumpmap', the sphere will appear dimpled when rendered. (see pic 1)

Two to choose from

There are two main types of texture, and which you can use depends on your rendering program. These two methods are procedural and bumpmaps. A procedural texture is a special mathematical formula which is applied to the surface of an object. For example, Imagine has a procedural texture called 'bumpnoise' and this texture alters the appearance of an object, making it appear bumpy. Like all textures, it



▲ Not today! Texture is how to create a 3D object with more realism. Just to create another what texture rendering looks like.

doesn't actually change the shape of the object, only its appearance.

The other type of texture is a bumpmap, or the Arrage that usually means an IFF image, such as a drawing saved by Personal Paint or a digitized frame of video created by ProCast. The IFF is loaded by the rendering program and applied to the surface of the object. Both types of texture can be classified as belonging to one or more of the following categories:

Colour bumpmap

This type of texture applies a pattern or an IFF image to an object, as though painting it. It can be used to apply details to an object, or just to make it more interesting. For example,

the Imagine Apple texture will give an object an instant wonderful mobile texture which will add life to any object.

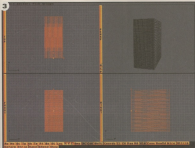
Bump or altitude map

This texture makes the surface of the object appear to pop out or indent. The dimples on an orange object are a good example. A special IFF image is created consisting of dots on a plain background. Where there is a dot, the rendering program causes a dimple to appear.

Attribute texture

This texture can affect different aspects of the object. Depending on how the rendering program works, the image or texture will influ-





once the final appearance of the reflectivity, specularity, transparency or any other attribute.

Some rendering programs can morph between states: in an animation, an object can start with one texture and change to a second over time. A sphere could start off as smooth as glass and turn into a dimpled orange. (see pic 2)

A brushmap is often used as a device, rather than simply a way of applying a texture. For example, if you are building an airplane object, you will probably want to add national markings, or even windows and engine names. Instead of trying to create detailed 3D objects, draw (or scan) a suitable image and make it into a brush map. Apply the map to the

object and you've saved yourself hours of work.

You can apply several maps at once to the same object and this can be used to give the impression of extra detail. Applying a brushmap of a window to a plane might look very flat and unrealistic. The same brushmap for a slightly different one could be re-applied as a bumpmap. The result is that the windows will all appear to have an extra depth.

It's also important how you go about applying a brushmap. If the object is curved or spherical, you need to inform the rendering program so it can make allowances. A good example is wrapping a sun of an atlas around a sphere to make a globe: you must make sure that it's wrapped in both X and Y directions to

achieve the desired effect. On the other hand, the label of a boxed beer can is wrapped in only one direction.

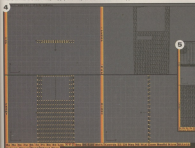
Procedural textures have the advantage that they animate well – in fact, some can animate all by themselves by altering some set-up values between start and end frames. Procedural textures are also generated 'on the fly' and will always contain the same amount of detail no matter the resolution of the final image. As seen in this tutorial's PC project, a brushmap can quickly become too 'blocky' when used close up. Worse, when animated there can sometimes be a shimmer due to differing effects. Unlike brushmaps, procedural textures take up little memory. Brushmaps do however have the advantage of speed: they are usually quicker to render than procedural textures.

Brushmaps can also be animated. For example, a series of frames from an animation (or grabs from slides created with ProData or VideoMaster) can be applied one frame at a time to an object in a scene. The object could be a television screen, or something more complicated such as a human head. As the rendered animation is created, the different frames are applied one after the other.

Build your own PC

Although Imagine allows objects to be constructed from primitive shapes, such as planes, cones or spheres, this is far from the only way to create models. Every Imagine object (except CSG spheres) is composed of various faces which are triangles constructed from three edges, drawn between three points. Imagine allows each point, edge and face to be dealt with individually and this is how it's possible to build accurate and realistic models. To illustrate we going to create an object to mini-tower PC case) dealing with it on a point-by-point basis.

The first step in creating the PC object is to define a large box which forms the main component of the computer. This is easily done by defining a single plane of suitable dimensions, and then use the ModExtrude tool to give it depth. This creates a three dimensional shape from our flat plane and it's the easiest way to create cubes and other solid shapes. To keep smoothing of the edges to a minimum, I've used a plane with a large number of sections so this produces a realistic curved effect at



▲ The most important part of any object is the front panel. In pic 4 and 5 we are adding some more detail to it by making it look more realistic. In pic 4 I'm using shading (create a new material surface for the cooling coils) in pic 5 the buttons are given a flat patch in my front panel



the edges. Not very exciting, but it's not meant to be. The colour is a typical beige and so far I have yet to apply any textures. (see pic 6)

Putting up a front

The most important part of the base is the front panel so it's worth spending a little time on it. I've created the panel as a separate object from the rest of the case, from a plane with multiple sections, and extruded a few units to give it depth. However, this time I applied scaling to the plane as it was extruded, this made it slightly larger at the back than at the front. This is where you switch to Imagine's point editor. Once 'Pick Points' is selected, the front panel object is redrawn as a series of points, linked by edges. These points can be selected individually and then moved or deleted. There is no point trying to rotate or scale a point, as they don't have any real 'size'.

You can see from pic 4 how the front panel was altered. Using 'Pick Points', I first of all deleted the points which formed the back surface of the front panel, leaving them somewhere. Then I deleted the points where the drive bays were located; this created a large hole in the front panel. The plan was to fill the gaps with another object, maybe a blinking panel or something more detailed such as a CD-ROM drive.



Then came the finishing touch. Using the 'drag box' to select points, I highlighted a section in the middle and dragged all the points backwards very slightly. With Phong shading on, this causes a dip in the surface, this stops it from looking flat and adds a degree more detail. Manipulating the points which make up the object is the key, if Phong shading was turned off, the face would look too angular. If more sections were used in the original front panel plane object, the smoothing would be more subtle. There is plenty of scope for experimentation. (see pic 4)

Other objects such as the blanking panel, buttons and feet are easily created from primitive objects. The buttons for example, are spheres which are cut and positioned so they are just poking out of the front panel slightly. There's no need trying to hide the jagged edges as they are hidden; what the eye doesn't see, the 3D rendering artist gets away with. On closer inspection, you may see a few cracks; the solution is to use QDS spheres, and render in Ray Trace mode. (see pic 5)

Now that we have the basic shape defined, we can cheat a little. Using a digital camera (photographed the front panel of a real PC and save the images of the back panel, and the front of the CD-ROM drive. I converted these into 256 colour BMP images, and pasted them onto suitable plane objects. These were then positioned in the right places. Given more time (and some artistic ability) there is no reason why these couldn't be drawn from scratch in an art program of course. (see pic 4)

There are plenty of disadvantages to cheating and making use of bitmap images. First of all, they take more memory than a simple drawing. Secondly they have no depth; a picture of a floppy disk drive is not the same as a modelled one, where there will be a button projecting in the Y axis. This can result in

Who made that phong?

Phong shading is an important attribute in Imagine, and one which is often overlooked. What an object has the Phong shading attribute switched on, Imagine effectively smooths any hard edges. This is great for creating a realistic-looking sphere but ruins your chances rendering a crisp cube. The bottom line is to remember to use Phong shading only when you want a smoothing effect.

There's slightly more to it than that though. If you create a cube from a plane with ten sections, then the smoothing effect will be more subtle than if you used a similarly sized cube made with only two sections. In fact, as you can see from the image below, the two sectioned cube starts to look very strange indeed.



unrealistic shadows and other weird-looking lighting effects. Finally, the resolution of the bitmap you're using can dictate the resolution of the final render.

Merging as one

Putting the final computer together is a matter of loading all the sub-parts (the box, the front panel, the fake CD-ROM drives and positioning them accurately in the Detail Editor. For one object I used the Front Panel, select it and then select all the other objects (use Amiga4). Now use 'Group' from the States menu and the entire computer is saved out as one object. It can then be loaded into the Stage Editor and even though composed of dozens of smaller parts, can be moved around and scaled as though it were one. (see pic 7)

As there are so many parts or need for accurate shadows, a scene render is particularly adequate for creating the final image. All that is needed is the addition of the ground and some background colour to make the scene complete - not forgetting a light source and some ambient lighting added in the Action editor of course.

After a few minutes experimenting with textures, I decided that the 'metal2' texture was not suitable for the case of the computer. As you can see, it introduces some unwanted reflections. Instead, the default metal material worked very well. Perhaps a night noise or bump would give the correct power-painted finished, but overall I was quite pleased with the final image. ■

John Kennedy

Lost and found

The missing projects from last issue's tutorial can be found on this month's CD in Magazine/Imagine.

Get your work published!



Do you have software, artwork, utilities, mods, games or any other Amiga creations that you think are worthy of inclusion on a Super CD? If so, get them to us now and give your work a worldwide audience. The best music module each month even gets recorded onto the CD as an audio track!

How to send your work in

All entries, including artwork must come to us on one or more disks. Submission may be uploaded to our FTP site as detailed here.

Make sure you label your disks clearly with your name and address, the name of what you are sending in and the category it is being sent into (like the one opposite).

Important: we cannot accept submitting disk-based software for use on the CD. We require files which can be used as we have the CD-ROM. Please include all the relevant details regarding system requirements and usage instructions within or each text document with your submissions.

Please complete the following form and enclose it with your disks:

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CU AMIGA

M A G A Z I N E

Next Month

OctaMED SoundStudio!

Yes, on next month's CU Amiga Magazine you'll find the amazing OctaMED SoundStudio - the full program with all features present and correct! In fact, you'll get version 1.1, which has been enhanced since the original V1.0 release. Offering 64 tracks of 16-bit stereo sound, with support for just about every sound card available, SoundStudio is THE Amiga music package!

Featuring:

OctaMED SoundStudio is packed full of unique features not available in any other Amiga packages ...

- Up to 64 stereo sample tracks available
- Realtime 16-bit output with sound card
- Realtime 14-bit output on standard Amiga
- Record to disk at CD quality on standard Amiga
- Powerful MIDI sequencing and recording features
- Mix and match 16/8-bit mono/stereo samples
- Realtime stereo echo and delay effects
- Built-in sample editor with many effects
- Various dual Amiga/MIDI slave options
- Loads Tracker, ScreamTracker and FastTracker mods, plus Standard MIDI files and all OctaMED formats
- Stacks of new samples on the CUCD edition

MARCH ISSUE ON SALE 15TH FEBRUARY



Wired World

Finishing up our HTML tutorial, we take a look through all the techniques that we've covered in this series and combine all that we've learnt to come up with one helluva web page.



Over the last few months, we've covered every HTML aspect that Amiga browser support. With this tutorial we'll say goodbye to HTML. Techniques only to return once the current crop of browsers catch up. So for our HTML finale we are going to put together an amazing web page using as many of the techniques we have learned from previous tutorials.

First things first: one of the most important rules of creating web pages is to know what you want beforehand. Carelessly evolved sites are often messy and difficult to follow. So, for our example we chose 70's music as our theme. Psychedelic colours, lava lamps and music artists sporting bell bottomed trousers all spring to mind.

That's entertainment

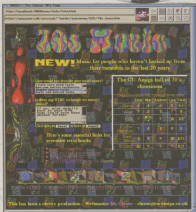
To keep anyone checking out your web site amused it's best to use in-line pictures as headings and illustrations so long as the page isn't much over 64K. For our web site, I decided to use a black background which instantly changes the page into a more visual experience than teams of text. To do this, here's the initial HTML code:

```
<HTML>
<HEAD><TITLE>What's 70's made of</TITLE>
<BODY BACKGROUND=black.gif BGCOLOR=black>
<LINK HREF=70s.html>
<LINK HREF=70s.html>
```

You should be familiar with this by now. We've also used the BGCOLOR attribute to set a background image to be tiled onto the browser. In this case it's some images put through ImageFX's liquid distort.

Bad taste approach

Amiga browsers have implemented support for TEXT, LINK and VLINK, since we started the HTML tutorial series. Here's a quick rundown of what they do. TEXT sets the colour of the text rendered. LINK sets the colour of links which have not been visited and VLINK for links which have. As before all colours are specified in 24-bit RGB or the R, G and B as a five number from 0 to FF (0 to 255 in decimal). For example, pure green would be 00, FF and 00. For the purpose of our 70's site we've



■ The opening page of the Wired World 70's website shows how a 64K site is viewed only less effectively with the right

set the text to a bright yellow; visited links to pink and visited links to red. We're going for the low on style approach.

It's extremely important to make the background image low key so it will not conflict with the foreground. Either make sure the palette are totally different or use an image which has been distorted considerably as we did with ImageFX and its bulging effect.

Next we're going to need some headers and pictures. Since Our Amiga Magazine

readers have the brilliant Imagine 4.0 3D rendering package at their disposal, why not use it for our web page?

For our banner, 70's Music, we've used the Red Bitmap packaging font Frank CUCC6 with the no.4 texture applied. This 24-bit image was cropped with ImageFX, converted to 64 colours (which is a good compromise) and saved as a transparent GIF. The GIF header color for ImageFX is on the Amiga. The result is an original and great looking header.



There's also a standard blue strip to help it create large eye automatically.

Light my fire

ImageFX 2.0 was developed for the WWW. First, at the top of our page, Using five frames of a global map with an increasing number of frames courtesy of ImageFX did the first. Finally the image was composed into an Animated GIF via WebGIF, not forgetting the status it is turned to make it transparent. We also revealed the order so the first frame is the lightest for browsers without Animated GIF support.

Our web site is going to start off with a 100 x 500 picture which will be positioned by the left border using the attribute ALIGN="left". Our new Staff Writer Andrew Korn already proved his worth by finding a 3D lava lamp object for this image. This piece of retro paraphernalia was rendered using a screen grab of the web page as a global map.

```
<IMG WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=500
ALIGN="left" SRC="lava lamp" =
lava.jpg.gif>
<IMG WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=50 ALIGN="
left" SRC="lava lamp" =
lava.jpg.gif>
<IMG WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=50 ALIGN="
left" SRC="lava lamp" =
lava.jpg.gif>
<IMG WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=50 ALIGN="
left" SRC="lava lamp" =
lava.jpg.gif>
<IMG WIDTH=100 HEIGHT=50 ALIGN="
left" SRC="lava lamp" =
lava.jpg.gif>
```

First we must specify the lava lamp's



dimensions as it can be laid out before loading. It's aligned to the left so all further material should wrap to the right of it. The ALIGN="left" attributes are there just in case one wants to drift by without losing the pictures. They don't know what they're missing. We also need to change the font to a heading size 2 so that's most appropriate here. The Animated GIF will go in, then wrapped in followed by some nice centered text justified to the right, hence the align="left" attribute.

Next we include a form and a table. Experiments with Netscape and Web 2.1 showed that it worked best to justify the table to the right and the form to the left. The following table is the table definition.

```
<TABLE WIDTH="100" ALIGN="right" =
BORDER="1">
```

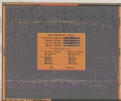
Bordering on cheesy

We've also included a table of data rating the 'Unleashed' scores for key musical acts of the 1970's from each member of the team. We've used a border but some nice left aligned point images and no border would also have done nicely.

To get the table in the right position we've made the `WIDTH="50%"` which makes the table 50% of the width left and `ALIGN="right"` makes the table fit between the lava lamp image and the right border. The 50% of that space left goes to the form.

The form example here uses Internet Explorer's `onmouseover` for making the table to `show/hide` images. www.mca.com

```
<FORM ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
```



Andrew Korn's recommended ImageFX 2.0 layout of making a table to 100 and adding a form to the right.

```
<TABLE WIDTH="100" ALIGN="right" =
```

Enter we included two form elements, one is a SELECT option for the user to choose what they believe their musical taste to be and the other is to see if there's any other tags that we haven't covered enough in this series of articles. For this we used the `<FORM ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =` command and pre-filled in some text by including text before the `<FORM ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =` command. Finally we add a compact single line to reset or post the form at the end. The VAL attribute sets the text for the button.

```
<FORM ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
ACTION="http://www.mca.com" =
```

No Web site is complete without links to relevant material. This is the world wide web and if you expect people to get to your page, you should be sending people to related pages too.



Net God speaks

This month I've been totally bombarded by email from Internet companies. There doesn't seem to be an end to it all. I now am well informed about all types of software releases and conferences that have no interest to me, not forgetting the mountains of stuff I've been receiving from credit card companies. So why is my letter box and hallway constantly stuffed full of this junk mail? Because I brought something via the Internet that's why. Currently exchanging Net surfers' personal details is big business. There are lots of companies who deal in this kind of thing and will gladly offer to buy and sell data about you. So, next time you type in your details into that web site, be wary. The company you bought a product off might happily sell on your details and there'll be an extra couple of trees on your desktop by Monday. There is the data protection act but unfortunately it doesn't cover other countries outside the UK. All you can do is Email the companies concerned and demand that they do not give your details away otherwise they'll lose a sale.

Surf's up!

PNG gets the thumbs up, USR's X2 goes solely digital and we get the latest from ProDad's web site.



PNG ratified by W3C

W3C, the organisation responsible for WWW standards, has issued a 'Test recommendation' of the new PNG format. This means that Netscape and Internet Explorer should now support PNG.

PNG (Portable Network Graphics) is a copyright-free system which supports from 1 to 48-bit depth images. And what's more, it's smaller than GIF (24-bit) and TIFF (32-bit). PNG will also feature much better interlaced/progressive loading, transparency, built-in platform specific gamma-correction and much more.

Regular readers of the Net God column will remember how much we raved about this new format a few months ago. CU Amiga Magazine saw PNG as an end to the fact that we are forced to use GIF to support PC browsers. PNG will put an end to that, so the Amiga was quick off the mark with a PNG datatype.

CU Amiga Magazine's site and many others will welcome support for PNG and will change over as soon as possible to make the most of the faster loading time.

New V43 picture datatypes

Andrew Kellner, author of the Supervisor system has created a new set of V43 datatypes for the V43 picture datatype replacement.

The new set are on the Amiga

in the datatypes drawer under the filename that begin with 'a'. Considerably optimized, these datatypes are faster than the original ones and sport performance settings for dithering and such forth. You can even choose to have a progress bar which appears every time a picture is decoded. So far that's the GIF, JPEG, GIF87 and PNG. And you don't have to use them with the V43 datatype system either so get them now!

Most Amiga Web browsers use datatypes to decode the inline graphics. So it's important to at least have good GIF and JPEG datatypes installed. Normally datatypes are limited to 256 colours but not so with the so-called V43 picture datatype replacement. The V43 replace word is on Phase 3's FTP site at ftp.ph3.org/phase3/pict/Pict.DT43. It's, though be warned a times out after a few months so you need to keep updating it.

However, the V43 compatible datatypes provided with the replacement are quite basic and slow so Mr Kellner's new version are very welcome.

USR 34K upgrades

USR's new 'Q' technology, announced last month, which promises to bring 50Mbps download rates to the market will rely solely on a fully digital exchange to the destination. This means

that it will not work for everyone but for those with digital exchanges Q2 is a very good alternative to the astonishingly priced ISDN in the UK.

The current crop of V34+ 33600 bps modems from USR including the Courier and Sponster can be upgraded when the standard becomes available which should be by the time you are reading this.

What's more, a few Internet providers have lined up to support the standard including Uline Pipes and Cable Online in the UK. With many providers dragging their feet to the V34+ 33600 standard alone Q2 uploads at 33600, Q2 is going to become a selling point soon and Q2s without will lose out. We say roll on Q2, pure yam.

ProDAD's site grows

German developer's ProDAD have made some significant additions to their Web site. In the English section there are now details of their new operating system P-OS. P-OS will be cross-platform care justice and is said to be very Amiga like. In fact, Amiga programs can be re-compiled to run under P-OS in order to run on PowerPC based platforms. There are more details in the News this issue. Also Drop in to <http://www.prodad.de/cgi/index.html> for more information. ■





Surf of the Month

It's time for our monthly surf session, highlighting some of the World Wide Web's weird, sometimes wonderful, but never boring corners.

This is a surf zone-free zone, so read on without fear of tedious references to websites and all that stuff. Well, that's almost true. If you'll forgive me, we start our surfing session with a bit of sound advice for anyone who's venturing out into the briny. **What to do if you are attacked by a venomous sea creature** turns a piece of serious education into a bit of fun as you play "spot the fish that will sting you" and find out how to avoid doing it. **Is a thing should happen.** Granted, fish around the UK are more likely to be toxic than venomous, but it could be valuable reading if you're planning a tropical holiday.

Talking of cheese (how's that for a link?) I thought it was time we revisited **The Cheese Page**. This will be a haven for cheese lovers and a highly educational spot for anyone who wants to woot up on the many varieties of this popular and practical foodstuff. There are 64 JPEG images for you to download, each depicting a specific type of cheese with a particular emphasis on Italian varieties. The interesting-sounding "World of Cheese" section is still under construction but there's still more

fun to be had with a transcript of the Monty Python Cheese Shop sketch and links to other sites of a fermented milk curd persuasion.

You'll probably be in need of some light entertainment after all that cheese, so how about **The Mount Knock Knock Joke Ever**, which actually goes under a slightly different title but that one is closer to the truth. Try this one for size: Knock knock. Who's there? Banana. Banana who? Banana split. That gem comes from Beth Corbett, aged 7. Alternatively enter the words "knc", "knck" and "plnk" into your preferred search engine for a more spicy selection of burlesque sites.

Our last silly site this month is the **Breakfast Cereal Hall of Fame**, which plots the history of the North American breakfast cereal. You never know when it might come in handy.

Following up last month's Sound Lab special review of Philips Digital Compact Cassette, you can find out more from the **Philips DCC** web site, which we forgot to tell you about last month. Shame on us. There's loads of information on the site, including all the technical bits that we didn't have room for in the magazine.

If you think your kids need a bit of education but they want something more fun, how about some "edutainment"? Yes, that origin-worthy buzzword from the Series is quite apt in this case, as **Kids Did This in Science!** is a big list of links to all kinds of science-related web sites, recommended by kids. Plant your kids here and they can surf around for hours (perhaps tell permission) having fun and learning at the same time. Wow!

We'll finish off with a quick look at the

Phase 8 site, which is particularly topical in light of their recent Atari announcement. At present there are no



Those sites in full

What to do if you are attacked by a venomous sea creature

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/forest/forest.htm>

The Cheese Page

<http://www.cheese.com/cheese/>

Mount Knock Knock Joke Ever

<http://www.joke.com/mtknock/mtknock.htm>

Breakfast Cereal Hall of Fame

<http://www.cereal.com>

Phase 8

<http://www.phase8.com>

Kids Did This in Science!

<http://www.kidsdidthisinscience.com>

details on *Atari* but if you bookmark the site and look up at a later stage you'll doubtless find plenty of *Atari* information. ■

Tony Hargan

They're on the CD

You'll find all these sites on this month's cover CD. You can view them and download them straight from the CD without a modem. Cool or what?



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240 watt (pairs)	£49.95
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Screenshots of games created with REALITY



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PART
6

What's the price of oil, gold or pork bellies got to do with Commodities on the Amiga? Nothing - they are your Workbench's unsung heroes. And they're free as well.

Hidden away on your Workbench (or maybe still on the Extras disk) are a collection of really useful little programs called Commodities. Designed to improve upon Workbench, they were Commodore's attempt to clean up the act of the multitude of Workbench "hacks" around and package them all into one consistent form.

There are hundreds available from Public Domain libraries and from the Amiga Internet site and it's worth your time to have a look through them.

As standard

The following is a list of Commodities that you'd expect to see in any setup.

AutoPoint

This Commodity will cause the Amiga to make active anything under the pointer. For example, as you move the pointer around the screen any Window which it passes over will become active. Some people find this useful, others irritating. It can be helpful if you are swapping between different screens a lot and want to get typing straightaway instead of having to click with the mouse.

Blanker

If you don't touch the mouse or press a key, this Commodity will suddenly clear the screen and move some coloured squiggles around. It's supposed to prevent the monitor from "burning in" or becoming damaged if the same static screen is displayed for a period of time, but practically

all monitors are capable of switching without it.

ClickToFront

This is quite similar to AutoPoint but borrows a concept from the Apple or PC. On these platforms, you don't need to click on the window's depth gadget to bring it to the top; you only need to select the Window and up it pops. This gives the Amiga the same facility. Try it, you might like it.

CrossDos

Don't confuse this with the CrossDOS device. This is a Commodity which changes the way in which the standard CrossDOS device PCIO works. As you may know, by using PCIO the Amiga can read or write to PC (x86DOS) format floppy disks. When this Commodity is running, a file to "list" any files which are being copied. This can be very useful when loading or saving text files which are sometimes filled with extra carriage returns when copied from one machine to another.

Exchange

This Commodity is a special one: it manages all the other Commodities which are running. Run it and a window appears which contains details of the Commodities and provides a prompt for bringing up or hiding the associated user interface.

FKey

Ever wondered what the point is of all those function keys on your keyboard? Wonder no more: now you can assign the functions

to various Amiga operations. Using FKey you can cycle through Windows, run a program or execute an Alias script. This makes it easy to customise your Amiga so you can launch all your favourite applications by pressing a function key.

MouseBlanker

MouseBlanker will hide the mouse pointer when you start typing until you move the mouse. This can be very useful when using a Word Processor for example, when you don't want an arrow obscuring the first few letters you type.

NoCapsLock

Um ... there must be a use for this program, there must be. NoCapsLock simply crosses the Caps Lock key from operating. Perhaps if you suffer from finger stiffness and keep hitting the Caps Lock key by mistake you might find it useful. Maybe you want to avoid confusing a child using the Amiga. There are, as you can already see, probably thousands of millions more. You

can still get upper case using the Shift Key in the usual way.

So simple

Using a Commodity is pretty easy. The standard convention is to click on them once to start them running and a second time to stop them. Most of them will run invisibly in the background, you might not even know they are working.

If you are more a Shell person than a WIMP fan, it's also possible to run Commodities directly from the Shell. For example, if everything is set up properly, you should be able to enter: `AutoPOINT` at the Shell and the Commodity will run. Like almost all programs run in this way, it won't automatically return control to the Shell until you quit it. If the utility is running in the background there won't be a window. Out gadget to click; you'll have to press Control and C or Control and B to stop it. It's therefore better to run it, like this: `RUN AUTOPOINT`. This will let AutoPoint run in the background, allowing the Shell to be used or even closed, even though the Shell which





▲ These help icons will save you a lot of trouble if you're new.

launched if it is no more, the program will still run happily. You need to specifically stop a Commodity or switch off the computer to kill it. Some Commodities also have a special "hot key" combination

so when you press the right keys the Commodity's user interface will appear.

For example, the Screen Reader commodity will wait for Control and B; press the keys together and up pops the special window from where the various settings can be adjusted. It's usually possible to redefine the hot keys in case they clash.

Making a Commodity start automatically is easy too: all you need to do is drag the Commodity's icon from where it is stored into the WDSStartup drawer. All programs in this drawer will be launched every time the Amiga loads its Workbench.

If you want to include the Commodities in your Startup Sequence or UserSequence rather than in the WDSStartup drawer, you'll need to make sure you include a line like this:

RUN :>REL: AUTOSTART

The right tools

All Commodities should support "Tool Types" - the information read in to a program which is stored

in the icon file. There are at least three as follows:

CX_PRIORITY

A commodity with a high priority will be given preference to a commodity with a lower priority when it comes to input events such as keypresses.

CX_POPUP

If this is set to "yes" then the program will start up and display its user-interface if it has one. If it's set to "no" it won't appear. If you are starting programs in the WDSStartup drawer, you will probably want this set to "no".

CX_POKEY

This is the key combination which will bring the user-interface (if any) to the front. The key combination can use non-alphanumeric keys, such as "left" for the left shift key, "control" for the control key and "alt" for the right alt key.

Commodities take up very little in the way of memory or processor power, so don't be afraid to keep them running all the time. Several other utilities which you might not first think of as

Other useful commodities

There are hundreds of Commodities written by Amiga programmers available from PD libraries from the Internet. Here are some of the ones which I have found most useful over the years.

CycleToMenu

This is a useful little program which changes the way in which cycle gadgets work. Instead of cycling through the entire list, a small window pops up making it simple to select the option you want.

MagicColors

If you use Magic Workbench icons, with a Workbench set to 256 colours you may find the colours are all wonky. This utility keeps setting the colours back to normal, so your icons remain in the correct shades of grey.

HotMode

This is very useful if you have a graphics card this. HotMode will intercept an application's request to open a screen display and, if necessary, force it to open up on your graphics card instead.

Dialup

One of the nearest little digital clock programs I've found.

MouseButton

If your replacement mouse has three buttons, this utility lets the third button operate as a shift key. This is handy for selecting multiple icons without having to use the keyboard.

Powerline

One of the old faithfuls: this program allows text displayed anywhere on screen to be copied to the clipboard. You can then paste it into another application. It makes it possible to snap text from an application and copy it to a Shell for example. It's surprising how useful this program is.

OpaqueMenu

Another program for graphics card users. With OpaqueMenu running, you can drag entire windows around the Workbench, other than menu windows. Useful, but if like me you might want reassurance that you haven't spent all that money on a graphics card for nothing.



Commodities can suddenly appear in the Exchange window. An example would be a virus detection program. Don't worry - these programs are just making use of the Commodity system. However, you won't find any large applications acting as Commodities.

The reason for this is linked to the way Commodities work. Any utility which wants to be a Commodity makes use of the Commodities library file. This enables the program to make use of the Commodities Input Handler - part of the operating system which swaps just before Intuition's own Input Handler. The

Commodities Input Handler looks after any special Hot Key combinations, and makes sure there are no clashes for key presses.

And that's it for Commodities, next month it's margins, share fluctuations and the like. We seriously value feedback from those with some more useful nuggets of information on your Workbench. **John Kennedy**



Logos, meanings and mysteries:



CDs queries, Parfait! and various other CD-ROM-related problems.



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Not everything fits into a pipework, but anything you like fits in here.



Q&A welcomes new recruit Andrew Korn to the "brain not brawn" problem-busting team. So send in all your Amiga-related problems to Q&A, CU Amiga Magazine, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Oh, I am so brawny. Once I've crushed your Amiga problems to a pulp, I'd like to see world peace.



Yes and after I've left all those puzzlers in heap, I'd like to travel the world, work with small children and help the needy.

GVP SIMMs



My system consists of an A1200 and GVP 1230 1 series accelerator (EC30, no FPU) with 4MB

RAM fitted. I recently did telephoning around some companies to find extra RAM for the accelerator, only to find that it isn't easy to come by, and £12 is extremely expensive. I was quoted £750 for 4MB from the only place I found that had any.

Is there any other way of adding 32 pin industry standard SIMMs to my system without having to disassemble the accelerator?

In the May 1994 issue, there was a feature on an A1081 SC3 card to add on to the A1200. Is this still available? If so, is it still a useful and reasonable way to get SC3 access? Also what other options are available, considering my setup?

J McDonald, Cornwall.

For some reason which is doubt normal at the time, GVP chose to use a non-standard SIMM format which has barely become the norm of many on Amiga now. Since GVP went under, there have become grey areas, and have gone up in price within industry standard SIMMs have plummeted. For example a standard 4MB SIMM costs around £25.

So there isn't any around this. One last tip if you are serious about upgrading would be to sell your current board and buy a new one. There are plenty of Amiga users out there who would be satisfied with 4MB RAM, so if you can find one of them to take it off your hands. Add the kind of money you've been quoted

for the SIMM and you could almost afford an IBM 600 card.

The GVP 1230 was a great SC3 solution at the time. However other options would be the *Sigatron* and the *Disigflex* as they will work if you change accelerators.

WordWorth CD



I am experiencing problems with Wordworth 3.1SE on CUDDO from the December issue. Am I alone in this or should I send off reams of enquiries to Digital? My set-up consists of Amiga 4000/EC30 with 6MB RAM with a Citizen Swift 80c printer.

When I try to install Wordworth to hard disk it follows the installation satisfactorily and it tries to install the printer then the following register appears:

```
Copied File
Spool 3
In Drawer
WWS1.1 Install...
S:\Draw\Templates
NoDraw Install... is fail.
This looks like it is trying to install the printer back on the last floppy install disk.
```

Accepting that I probably have the installation complete apart from the printer driver, when I try to open the Wordworth 3 program on my hard disk (having rebooted the system), I get "Could not open Shamon Book 'Map font' followed by 'Unable to initialize document'". Please help!

Brian Tishman, Winchester.

It sounds like you have loaded up from install disk I rather than your hard drive. When the installer program is run, it copies files to various

directories on your system disk. The system disk is not necessarily your hard drive - it is wherever disk you booted up from. If you boot up from the floppy, the installer has no idea that your hard drive is your normal system disk and assumes that install disk 1 is in fact your hard drive.

If however you are installing something in your hard drive, make sure you boot up from it unless you are told otherwise.

There is a problem file on install disk 1. In this file there is an explanation of what to do if you are presented with the "could not open Shamon Book..." message. If re-installing WWS doesn't resolve this problem, look there first.

Too many fonts



I have installed WWS3.1 onto my hard disk and have managed with the aid of Executive Copy to transfer

fonts from the external Drawer on the CD. When I delete them they still appear on the font list but when called (respond with a statement that they cannot be opened) How do I delete from this font list? Also how do I get WWS3.1SE to read my font list like the other programmes on my hard drive?

I got my Amiga primarily for video production but cannot find much good software apart from Scale to assist in producing graphics/motion/controlling. Can you help?

L.J. Mollard, Cheshire.

Wordworth uses outline rather than bitmap fonts because bitmap fonts are of no use for large text printers. There are hundreds of PB outline fonts, so if your collection isn't big enough, get some more. WWS3.1SE

generates its own internal font list. If you delete a font from the directory, it will still appear in the fontlist. The solution is to delete the fontlist file, which can be found in **WINDOWS\SYSTEM**. You then must make a new one by clicking on the **INSTALL/UNINSTALL** icon in the **WINDOWS** dir.

There are some great video packs open available upon Free Scale. Two new ones from ProEMD, Mountain Design and 4things, were released in our December 88 issue. Our March 89 issue had the correct **Free Video Stage Pro** on the cover disk and is still available from our back issues department.

Left out



I make quite heavy use of my RAMTEMP directory to shift data around from archives. I leave it

out on the Workbench regularly, and it occurred to me that it would be excellent to be able to do this automatically from the startup sequence. Is this possible? I have an AT 300 C30 8MB 1 K33 1.

Stephen Ralph, Hampshire.

It is indeed. When Workbench starts up it checks any disk it can find for a file called "bootdisk" which tells it what to do next. To solve your problem, when Workbench loads it would need to find a "bootdisk" file in RAM, which will need to be put there in the startup sequence. First create an ASCII file which reads: **temp** and save it in your 5 directory as "bootdisk". Then edit your startup sequence. Just after the line which reads something like: **CHDIR C:\WINDOWS** add: **CD C:\WINDOWS** Save the file.

Groupy again! (lines - info to ramtemp file)
I'll copy the address drive line for the RAMTEMP directory. Then add: **Groupy again! bootdisk to ram - bootdisk**
I'll set up your bootdisk file. Reboot your computer and make the TEMP driver in on the Workbench.

Tower power



I have a standard Amiga 1200 which I am looking to expand with a Tower. Please could you answer some of my questions.

1. I recently saw an offer by 160 for upgrading to a tower/desktop option with CD-ROM, power supply and Spectral SCSI. With an accelerator in mind would I need

to purchase the optional SCSI kit for the accelerator or purchase the HQ offer on the SCSI kit?
2. What's the difference between a 286/33 and a tower conversion?
3. Do I need the maths co-processor with an accelerator and a 5MB RAM Fast RAM?

Gareth Graham, Cardiff.

1. The Spectral interface should work perfectly with all modern accelerators.
2. Desktop normally means a spare box you slot under your monitor while the tower is an upright column you stick next to your monitor.
3. If you want an accelerator to make your machine go a bit faster you don't need a co-processor. If you plan on using math intensive software such as Imagine the co-processor is highly recommended. 16 RAM you add to your machine is Fast RAM. 5MB refers to the type of chip module used.

Questions about tower conversions are coming in thick and fast. A tower makes it easy to add extra storage drives and video power supply problems in a minute. We are thinking about doing an article on DIT tower conversions for the more technically minded reader. If you have an opinion or idea about this, please write to us.

CD-ROM DRY



I was delighted by your article in the December 88 issue on fitting a CD-ROM and I would like to go

ahead and 'do it myself', however I'd like a little advice first.

1. I have a Western Digital 2420 hard drive. Is this 2.5 or 3.5 inch?
2. If it is 3.5 inch I would opt for a mini tower to house 800i and the Golden Image CD-ROM kit.
3. The tower I have in mind is one from a local PC outlet with a 250w power supply is this sufficient?
4. Is the Golden Image kit double speed or quad speed?
5. I envisage connecting the hard via an adaptor consisting of a 44 pin input and two 44 pin outputs for the appropriate cables to connect to. Is this a viable solution?
6. If I move the hard drive to a Tower, is it just a matter of unplugging it, unconnecting it, and refitting it in the tower?

L. Kemp, York.

1. The simple way of finding out is to measure it. As a rough guide, if it is small enough to sit in a cigarette box, it's a 2.5 disk.
2. 800w is more than enough.
3. We think you may be a little ahead

up here. The Golden Image kit is not a CD-ROM drive, but a cheap mounting system which comes with all the cables you need and a serial cable. The speed depends on what drive mechanism is fitted to it.
4. That's about it, but it would be a pain to make. Golden Image will tell you an 800i Quantum, which is ideal. Is that right.
5. Yes, you're right there.

Mythical beasts



I wish to purchase an HP Deskjet 8700a but am having problems getting a printer driver. I've been in touch with Hewlett Packard but don't have much joy. Can you help?

No name or address supplied.

Several Packard gave up supporting the Amiga some time ago and are unlikely to be of any help. Write to them and tell them they are doing customers. Peter Smith or Christopher may have a compatible driver; please a sticker/stick and ask. It would be worth asking HP if the 8700a is compatible with one of their other printers; an HP300c driver would be easier to get.

More questions



1. I have an A1200HD magic pack. I heard that boson used a high density drive instead of a normal

Amiga drive, mainly disabling the high-density mechanism! This causes a lot of games to become incompatible. Is there a solution?
2. I want to buy an accelerator, probably a 8000i. (bearing in mind that I don't want extra memory and cannot afford much more than £200), what is the best option?
3. On opening the trapdoor to fit out where the accelerator should go, I could not find any kind of interface. On my A500 there was a female pin but I can't find one on the A1200. Where should I look?
4. I have an M1 240s monitor. The image cannot be moved vertically.

only stretched and is not controlled. There is an annoying black gap at the top. Any solutions?
5. Despite these setbacks I'm still a dedicated Amiga owner and would like to buy a CD-ROM drive in the future. I was thinking of buying a SCSI device. If I did this would I still be able to use other SCSI devices such as a ZIP drive? What is the best SCSI interface to buy?
6. Could I connect an Ultra internal IDE device? I cannot see where it would fit. If it cannot be fitted, should I buy an IDE Quantum?
7. Is its guarantee still valid. However, is it valid with Amiga Technologies, Viscorp, Eascom or the shop I bought it from?

James Greville, Mid Glamorgan.

1. Things are a bit confused here. The 'HD' reference in 1200HD refers to the hard drive in it. However, some machines also have high density floppy disk drives also known as HD drive. These floppy drives have been altered to use like old Amiga double density (DD) drives, but some games with custom file formats will not work. Sometimes this is because the games are duplicated on high density disks, in which case you can simply cover the open notch that signals a high density floppy. Use the tape drawer on this month's CD for a hardware fix to the problem.

2. Item the ask for the best deal. £200 should get you a cheap 800i with 800i.
3. It takes you to the edge of the circuit board inside the trapdoor.
4. Getting a perfect display on an 8000i is near impossible, but by using the vertical stretch in combination with the overscan and custom-made profile you, should be able to achieve your problem.
5. The Deskeyler and the Spectral are the ones to consider. SCSI interfaces are good at handling multiple drives.
6. There is no space inside an A1200 for an internal CD ROM. Our December 88 issue had a feature on using IDE drives with the Amiga.
7. Amiga guarantees are currently covered by a company called Diabtech, 899 Limited, Park St., Jagdish Park 4, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 1BA. Tel: 0892 277 770. ■

Send your Q&A problems to ...

You can send your technical problems for answers - by post - to CU Amiga by the following means:
By letter to: CU Amiga, Priory Court, 16-18 Farnborough Lane, London, EC3R 8AJ.
Email: Q-Amiga@magnum.co.uk.
NO SASES PLEASE. We regret that we can't respond to readers' questions by post or over the phone. Please do not include a stamped addressed envelope with your letters as we simply don't have time to answer the thousands we receive. Responses are only available through the pages of this magazine.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

With over 600 floppy disks worth of stuff, it'd be silly not to make the most of CUCDs whether you have a CD-ROM drive or not.

■ Q. I don't have a CD-ROM drive on my Amiga yet, will I still be able to use my CU Amiga Magazine CD-ROM on a PC or Apple Mac?

■ A. Yes, but in a limited way. You will be able to access all the data on it. You'll see the directories and you will be able to view any pictures or read any text which is stored in plain or cross-platform formats.

A perfect example is HTML files. Using a Web browser such as Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer you can read any HTML documents on the CU Amiga Magazine disk. This includes reading the text, viewing the pictures and using the links.

■ Q. Can I use the programs though?

■ A. No, you can't. Amiga programs run on Amigas and won't run on PCs or Apple Macs.

■ Q. Can't I get an Amiga emulator for the PC and run the programs that way? After all, I can emulate a PC on an Apple Mac or my Amiga?

■ A. Well, yes, there is UAE. It's not very fast though and to be honest it's still an A500 emulator even on an P102. Although technically impressive, it's not an ideal solution.

■ Q. Is there a hardware based Amiga emulator for

either of these machines?

■ A. No and it is unlikely that there ever will be. At the moment the best piece of hardware for running Amiga programs remains an Amiga.

■ Q. I don't have a CD-ROM drive on my Amiga but I have one on my PC at work. Will I be able to copy the files across to my Amiga?

■ A. In theory yes, as the same standard is used to record data on PC and Amiga CD-ROMs. However, you may have some problems, such as the fact that the Amiga can cope with long filenames and the PC sometimes can't.

Windows95 (or NT) solves the filename problem, as it can deal with filenames other than those in MSDOS format. However, you still can't copy those directly to floppy disk because floppies are still in MSDOS format. One solution is to use an archiving utility such as PKZIP which will pack up all the files on the PC, move the archive to the Amiga and unzip it. The result is that the filenames are preserved.

■ Q. How can I move the files from the PC to the Amiga?

■ A. To move the files, you have two options: use a removable disk which both systems can read or link the two platforms together. Using the Amiga's built in

CrossDev device (PC) it can read floppy disks formatted by the PC but only double density, not high density (unless you have an A600 or special floppy drive). It's also possible to use Inquest or DP drives if you have the necessary hardware. You cannot use parallel port versions of the Zip drive on the Amiga though.

The best way is to network the machines using Ethernet, but this is overkill for file transfer, not to mention virtually impossible on the A1200 (go on, prove me wrong - please!). The best way is to connect the PC and Amiga together using a Fast Modem cable, run a terminal program and use ZModem to transfer files.

If your machines are a long distance apart, you may have to resort to using modems and terminal software. If you only have one modem, it's possible to use a Bulletin Board or Internet FTP site to temporarily store data: you can upload it from the PC and download to the Amiga.

■ Q. Does the opposite hold true? Can I use PC CD-ROMs on my Amiga?

■ A. You can read PC CD-ROMs but you cannot run the programs. Yes, it is possible to emulate a PC on an Amiga but it's not very fast and so games or sophisticated Windows applications won't work. If you use a program only available on PC CD-ROM then resist the temptation to buy it, even if you have a CD-ROM drive and a PC emulator for your Amiga. Ask for an Amiga version instead.

■ Q. Is it possible make a CD-ROM disc which will work on both an Amiga and a CD-ROM?

■ A. Yes. Both platforms can read the CD-ROMs perfectly, so it's only a matter of storing software for both machines.

For example, you could have a CD-ROM full of pictures which has viewer programs for both the PC and the Amiga. The pictures could then be stored in a format which both viewers can read, such as JPEG or GIF.

The result is that one CD-ROM is of use to both the Amiga and the PC.

Another example are the CD-ROMs which contain objects for 3D rendering programs. An Imagine object can be read directly by both PC and Amiga versions of Imagine.

In any case, there are many Amiga utilities for reading PC style graphics (e.g. GIF, BMP), animation (e.g. AVI, FLC, CLY) and sound files (e.g. WAV). There is usually some way of making use of data stored on a CD-ROM.

■ Q. Can I play any of my collection of VideoCDs on my Amiga's CD-ROM drive?

■ A. Yes, but apart from some very slow software, only if you have an SMD108 decoder from H2Soft and if your CD-ROM drive is compatible.

■ Q. I have a SMD108/CDTV - can I use the CD-ROM drive with my A1200?

■ A. Yes, it's possible to create a limited network which links the CDTV or CDTV to the Amiga computer. The CD-ROM drive will appear on the Workbench as though it were connected directly to the A1200.

OK now you have to excuse for using CUCDs. ■
John Kennedy



Sound Lab

Making music on your Amiga needn't cost a fortune. Some shareware audio packages put their commercial competitors to shame.

There's loads of good new audio and music software available for your Amiga, but much of it only gets my praise because it's shareware. This month we'll uncover some of the best examples of exciting, interesting and plain useful audio shareware.

Leaping ahead

One of the most promising bits of software to have come to our attention recently is **Carnoufage**. It comes in two versions, straight Carnoufage and Carnoufage AB. Both versions are MIDI sequencers that use a very attractive customised GUI system that's best suited to a large screen mode, such as Prodigyline Interface (if you can handle it) or a graphics card. What's brilliant about Carnoufage AB is that it can pretend to be a Creative Audio 16-bit stereo hard disk recording. For this you need a Tascote or a Maestro sound card (available from MacroSystem in Germany or White Knight Technologies in the UK).

This represents a major step forward for Amiga music software. Until now the only solution that did

anything like this was a combination of Bars and Pipes and a Sunrise ADR16 sound card, the pair of which would have set you back a tidy sum. For the record, while Sunrise have ditched Amiga support, Bars and Pipes is free to all Commodore customers.

Sample-x files

Music II seems to be aware of the basic level of control the program offers over Amiga samples compared to MIDI instruments.

Sample-X is a clever program that solves the problem. It sits in the background while Music II is running and intercepts MIDI data externally. From within Sample-X you can set up a bank of samples, each corresponding to a specific MIDI channel. When Sample-X sees data transmitted on the relevant channel from Music II, it plays the samples accordingly. This means you can replay up to four Amiga samples from within your Music II sequences, applying all the normal MIDI controllers to your samples. The MIDI data is passed through to the external port as normal for use with MIDI instruments.

Sample-X is not limited to use with Music II; it can be set up to receive its MIDI data from the serial port via a MIDI interface, so you could set up your Amiga as a four voice sample replay module controlled by an external MIDI device, such as a keyboard or a sequencer.

Top value

New Dackies are appearing all the time. One that caught our attention recently was **Digibooter**. Unlike



1 Carnoufage AB's most exciting feature is its ability to pretend to be a Creative Audio 16-bit recording card.

many have developed into impressive beasts featuring real-time DSP functions and all kinds of fancy widgets, there's still room for smaller, simpler alternatives. Digibooter is just such a tracker, offering eight channels with very good mixing and output sound quality even on a basic A1200. The output is 14-bit, and you can make your choice from any combination of 44.1 kHz, 16-bit 11kHz or 16-bit WAV samples.

For those used to the traditional tracker layout, moving to something like SoundStudio can be a bit of a mission (although it really is much easier to use after a short

while), so if you can't contemplate too much of a change from your current tracker the familiarity of Digibooter will be important. New player commands are quite rare these days, so it's good to see some in Digibooter, like 'Robot' which adds a variable phaser-like effect to the specified sample. Planned future additions to Digibooter include support for 16 bit cards such as Tascote and Maestro and more available tracks.

The PD version has its save options disabled, so if you want the full version you'll need to upgrade from the author. ■

Tony Hogan



2 Digibooter is just what the doctor ordered in the larger musical beasts it offers eight channels with decent quality mixing and sound output.

Where to get them

This wonderful software is not available in any shops. The shareware versions can be found on this month's cover CD. For those without a CD drive, you'll be able to get hold of shareware demos of these programs from your Amiga source, or any good PD houses. Here are Email addresses for the authors of the packages mentioned here.

Carnoufage

Author: Martin Endres, Osterfeldweg 41, 20077 Hamburg, 040/7649157, Germany. Email: endres@werb.de

Sample-X

Author: Shaun O'Riordan, 11 Leyland Street, Stratford, London, E15 3DD. Email: shaun@edc.citynet.co.uk

Digibooter

Authors: Top and Watt, ul. Poprawczna 66/6, 01-147 Młocin, Poland. Email: waldok@radom.hogyan.wrocl.pl



Backchat

As usual controversy reigns in the Backchat pages. And our campaign to find the best Amiga stockist in the country continues.

How could you?

Having purchased the December issue of CU Amiga, I thought I would be treating myself to a good positive Amiga read. The magazine was to its usual good standard but I found one article that completely degraded the value of CU Amiga Magazine, Public Domain users and Public Domain programming.

In the article 'The Best of Both Worlds', the last few paragraphs by Mark Forbes of Effige Software define the Public Domain as the Amiga as being useless. Quoting him "We also believe that domains that people create and put into Public Domain are useless and not the way forward." This is a bit of a bold statement isn't it Mr Forbes?

Was this article really a good way to boost the Amiga? I am shocked that CU Amiga Magazine who use public domain as a source for their magazine, both on the cover disk and on pages within the magazine, would agree to print such a false and inaccurate statement. Let me point out a few facts:

1. If it was not for the Public Domain scene keeping the Amiga going through its rough patches, you would not have your Amiga in front of you right now. The Amiga would have collapsed completely a long time ago.
2. Public Domain is the backbone to the Amiga. It is a strong and dedicated source of software, which is sometimes better than what is commercially released e.g. Term and WComm.
3. The demo scene is what helps sell the Amiga. Games are the main source of graphics and sound promotion.
4. Public Domain on the Amiga has the largest following of any other platform.

So Mr Forbes, I have a question. If Public Domain on the Amiga is so useless, who is Amiga so popular? Do I make any point? In the next paragraph, Mr Forbes goes on to explain that the

Power PC chip is the way to go. Reading through the article, it sounds as if Mr Forbes is saying that because Public Domain is so useless and that there is no profit in it, the Power PC chip is required. Oh really. So a Power PC chip is going to create better quality Public Domain software, and make it profitable? Could you just explain this to me? In Public Domain you get good quality as well as fast, but this is the same in the commercial world. The idea of Public Domain is public free software so it will not be profitable.

I am a dedicated Amiga follower and PC owner. I love my Amiga and would hate to see it die. Even if I did, I would never sell the machine and I don't think any other Amiga lover would do either. The Amiga is a state-of-the-art piece of kit and undoubtedly remarks made by Mr Forbes are obviously impulsive thoughts. If he looked into the Amiga, and pushed the point sign from his eyes he might just see what a stupid remark he made. The Amiga programmers need encouragement and thanking for helping keep the Amiga alive, negative remarks like this one are insult and of no use to the Amiga at all.

From my conclusion of Effige Software, they are just interested in money, not the Amiga community. I understand they have to make money to survive the cut-throat market of the software industry, but this problem is for dedicated Amigaans... Rubbish!

As you can guess, you have hit a sore point in this article. I believe I have possibly spoken out for many Amiga users and I expect I have their backing.

Matthew Tillet, Swalead

First things first, Mark Forbes did not make any of the remarks you are referring to, he was simply interviewing Ian Jenkins from Effige Software who is responsible for the statements in the article. Perhaps you could have read the article a bit more clearly than you did. Just because Mark reports someone's opinion/remarks does not mean that he or CU Amiga Magazine agrees with them. CU Amiga Magazine does not have a policy of retelling people's opinions and remarks so just because it does not mean that we necessarily

agree with them. CU Amiga Magazine supports public domain wholeheartedly. As we understand it, the comment Ian Jenkins made was referring to the practice of promoting commercial games by releasing limited demos of the games into the public domain. His point seems to be that this doesn't work as a promotional aid, he wasn't slagging off the whole PD scene.

CD oversight

Considering your excellent article telling every one how to get CD-ROMs for next to nothing (December 96), I think there is quite a serious point which you skipped over. When connecting drives like this, there is a risk you may damage the CPU in your machine. The IDE port on the A1200 is, unlike the A4000, unbuffered and connected directly to the CPU. Furthermore it was only ever designed to connect one 2.8" hard drive on a very short cable. Connectors used to supply cables around two inches long at one point. As you can see, leaving it up with generic/huge 3.5" and 5.25" drives can cause some harm.

A better alternative is to have a buffered cable. Golden Image sell one that can reliably take three devices, and Eynsford will sell you a four-device cable for less money. This doesn't risk your CPU and has the advantage that you can take your cables just about anywhere. A friend has his twirling around the back of his desk into a mini-tower case, a distance of about a metre, with no problems.

I'm not denying that you can rely on just the original port, indeed my self-built A1200T has half a metre of unbuffered cable going into a hard drive and a CD but people should be aware of the risk of irreversible damage. I'm going to swap mine for a buffered device so I can use one of the now super-cheap Vquist 523.25 drives. Now there's an idea for a feature!

Chris Appleton (Pure Amiga),
chris@fushad.demon.co.uk, Pure Amiga -
<http://www.pureamiga.co.uk>

You are correct in saying that the Amiga (286) interface is unbuffered. There is some risk of direct not working with longer IDE cables. However, the consensus of damage resulting from longer cables and 3.5" hard drives/CD-ROMs have been overrated and such combinations will for



Points of view

Look back in wonder



■ Tony Morgan is
CU Amiga Magazine's Editor

By Tony Morgan

You might think it rather strange to be reading a retrospective piece about 1999 when we're already a couple of weeks into '00. The reason for this timing is because most similar articles

that appear in monthly mags during December will have been written around about October due to the long production and distribution times involved, so most of those are taking complete guesses at what might have happened over the two most important months of the year, which is a bit rubbish really. Anyway, on with the busy-eyed stroll down short-term memory lane.

Overall it's been a much better year for the Amiga scene than most had envisaged. Not only did we see the continued development of some key software titles (Image FX, CorelWinD SoundStudio, Photogenics and Personal Paint to name a few) but we've actually been witness to some totally new software packages. Art Effect and Draw Studio have been notable examples.

On the hardware side there's also been healthy development from third parties, with numerous CD-ROM solutions, a stream of ever-cheaper and faster accelerators, a couple of new 16-bit sound cards, not to mention all kinds of little widgets from small developers across the globe.

Games-wise things have been noisier indeed, but there have certainly been some highlights along the way.

Like Warren TOC, Men Breed 3D 2, Chaos Engine 2 and X-Flame Racing.

These it's announcement of the *Amiga* project has given new hope to all who are sceptical of any worth while outcome from the Amiga Technologies/MSCorp deal.

Perhaps the best aspect of all was the 'carry on regardless' attitude of us all despite the Amiga's continual mismanagement. Oh, and the increasing CD-equipped readership telling us our CU Super CDs are wonderful. That means a lot to us.

And so we come to the downsides of the year. You don't need me to tell you the Amiga's perpetual state of limbo has cast a shadow over the whole scene, but I just did anyway. For one reason or another, sales of top Amiga games have not matched their potential this year. X-Flame Racing is one example. It should have sold by the truckload but in the end it never really did. And then of course there was the Walker, the new Amiga that never made it further than a single prototype displayed at a couple of computer shows.

But hey, just take a look at all these 'uppers' and you'll see that really, 99 was a pretty good year all in all. I certainly enjoyed it. I hope you did too. ■

“The best aspect of 99 was the ‘carry on regardless’ attitude of us all, despite the Amiga’s continual mismanagement.”

Here to stay



■ Lisa Collins is
CU Amiga Magazine's
Sports Editor

By Lisa Collins

If there's anything that 1999 proved, it demonstrated just how big the Amiga community is. I don't think any other platform could have survived the past year. The combination of sporadic ownership changes (which seem to be still continuing), no new machines coming out and little or no game software would have dampened even the most dedicated computer enthusiast's ardour. But the Amiga tried, and made of sterner stuff. Users as well as the remaining companies are still incredibly loyal to the platform.

Despite all the pitfalls that 1999 threw our way we still saw some great games coming out on the Amiga when others had written it off as a games platform. *Warren* and, more recently, *Chaos Engine 2* proved that the Amiga is very viable and capable as a games platform. And the fact that *Championship Manager 2* already has tons of pre-paid orders shows that the Amiga

games community is still out there, waiting to snap up any decent games that are due out.

Perhaps, one drawback to 1999 was that some companies saw the departure of other bigger players in the software industry as a chance to cash in on a games-starved market. This entrepreneurial activity would not have been such a bad thing if the games that some of these companies churned out were of any quality. Unfortunately, 1999 saw lots of games that really shouldn't have been released onto the commercial market. Thankfully, we had some cracking good games to make up for this and *Mindless* *Forbidden* came in just at the end of 1999 to prove to us that all is not lost yet.

Finally, the announcement of a new machine at the end of 1999, hopefully heralds good things for 1997. Rumoured CU-Amiga Magazine will be there to chart its progress. ■

“In the face of all the pitfalls that 1999 threw our way we still saw some great games coming out on the Amiga.”

CD power



by Neil Gethwix

It's difficult to sum up my thoughts on the last year. On one hand it represented another major let-down for the Amiga: Amiga Technologies promised the Watson only to fall foul of the parent company Excom's liquidation before we ever even got to see the machine in all its finished and final glory.

We all saw machines being briefly remanufactured, only to fail at the test hurdle. More promises made and then switched aside. This seemed to be the recurring theme of '96, increasing numbers of commercial software developers gave up the

ghost as we all sat and waited for the Amiga to enter into yet another age of darkness.

Yet amazingly, I can't be gloomy about the year gone by and here's why. The shareware and games scene kept up as it always had. We saw an explosion of Amiga users getting online and a resurgence of development of Internet software such as Web browsers.

The massive success of the June 1996 issue Internet book/book went more than I could have hoped for. The Amiga and the Internet suddenly became a major part of the market, not a niche. Now my phone has quiet on my desk (well, almost) while my E-mail folders absolutely bulge with incoming mail.

The Internet wasn't the only growth area for the Amiga, there was also the CD phenomenon. What we started with the Amiga CD cover-mount in our November '95 issue led the entire market into something nobody, least of all us, saw coming. Monthly CDs! We started off with painstakingly hand-crafted CDs. I still laugh when reading the hidden-must-reads files. And from these humble beginnings we grew the CD side of our magazine into a thriving and booming industry. Now with monthly CDs it's a much more streamlined operation. With the help of Neil Gethwix our CD compiler,

“For what the foolish were calling a dead market there was certainly enough to keep me busy.”

the Amiga now has the best cover-mounts of any platform ever. For what the foolish were calling a dead market there was certainly enough to keep me busy!

Overall, in 1996, Amiga users got wired to the Internet, bought CD-ROM drives and powerful accelerators. Now we face a new year with our hot-hot Amigas – a year that looks set to promise new hope in the form of Phase II's unfortunately gone-wild A500. This machine had me drooling over the spec just as I did when I last read about the Amiga in 1986.

So for 1997 we have to look forward to replacing the aged 68000 with the mighty Power PC. Clock speeds in the hundreds of megahertz and the Sparco RTG system making our machine to PC so we can again be a part of the mass market. Yet more brilliant affordable commercial and shareware software and on the glowing horizon, the mighty A500 looks threatening to teleport us to a new dimension of computing ecstasy. Good. It's enough to bring a tear to my eye. ■

■ Neil Gethwix is
Amiga magazine's
Editorial Editor

The people's computer



by Andrew Corn

1996 has not been good to the Amiga. More and more software companies have abandoned the machine, magazines are falling by the wayside, and support for the platform in the high-price has almost gone. There seems less and less reason for optimism as the weeks go

by. But in an odd sort of way this may be exactly why the Amiga continues to survive.

The Amiga's previous success has always been due to its cheap entry level price. Most would have approved of the Amiga; he would no doubt have considered it the people's computer. Want to some DTP? DTP! Make music? Do 3D graphics? It's all there and ready to go for an amount you can afford. Putting power in the hands of the masses and all that.

The problem is that it isn't as cheap as it used to be. Mass production in the PC market has made this the platform of cheap computing power. For the cost of an A3300 with a 300MB hard drive and monitor you can buy a Pentium which is comparable in speed to an '080, and they'll throw in 640 or so, a larger hard drive, CD-ROM, sound card etc.

Excom probably had this in mind when they designed the Watson. Amiga die-hards complained about the low specs by today's standards, but it was never meant to

compete with PCs as it was meant to sell for half the cost. People no longer expect computers to be cheap. The Amiga users of tomorrow are the people who have stuck with the machine through the last few lean years, the ones who are willing to put up with the inconvenience of

“The A-Box might just be the machine we have been waiting for ... an Amiga for the serious Amiga user.”

high-tower inavailability and poor software support because they know if they put in the money and effort, their Amiga will do things for them that would be a nightmare to get another machine to do.

The A-Box might just be the machine we have all been waiting for: a niche machine, an Amiga for the serious Amiga user, not for the people. It's a pity it isn't the people's computer any more, but that's the way things go. ■

■ Andrew Corn is
Amiga magazine's
new Staff Writer

[illegible]